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The Coach House, Gate House Farm, Ashbourne Road, Kirk Langley, Ashbourne, DE6 4NJ

Heritage Impact Assessment

for the proposed construction of a single storey side extension to replace existing conservatory

31st March 2026

RIBA

Chartered Practice

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Proposed construction of a single storey side extension





INTRODUCTION

This Heritage Impact Assessment has been prepared to accompany a planning application for proposed works at The Coach House, Gate House Farm, Ashbourne Road, Kirk Langley.

The proposed development comprises the demolition of an existing conservatory and the construction of a single-storey side extension.

The purpose of this report is to identify and assess the potential impact of the proposed development on heritage assets, and to demonstrate how the scheme has been designed to preserve the character and significance of the host building and its wider setting.

SITE DESCRIPTION AND CONTEXT

The application site forms part of Gate House Farm, located along Ashbourne Road within the rural settlement of Kirk Langley.

The Coach House is a former agricultural building that has been converted to residential use. The building retains elements of its agricultural origins, including:

- Red brick construction
- Simple linear form
- Traditional openings and proportions

The site sits within a rural setting characterised by:

- Open countryside
- Agricultural land and watercourses, including Flagshaw Brook
- A collection of historic and converted farm buildings

The site location and its relationship to the surrounding landscape are illustrated on the submitted site location and block plan.

The building has been subject to previous alterations, including the addition of a conservatory, which is visible on the existing drawings – 002 2026 002

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HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The Coach House

The Coach House is not statutorily listed; however, it is considered a non-designated heritage asset due to its historic association with the wider farmstead.

Its significance is derived from:

- Its agricultural origins as part of Gate House Farm
- Its contribution to the historic farmstead grouping
- The use of traditional materials, particularly red brick
- Its role within the rural landscape

Whilst conversion works have altered the building, its overall form and character remain legible.

The Existing Conservatory

The existing conservatory is a later addition and is not of historic or architectural interest.
It is characterised by:

- Lightweight construction
- Domestic design that does not reflect the agricultural character of the host building
- Limited visual integration with the existing structure

As such, it detracts from the overall coherence and character of the building and makes no positive contribution to its significance.

Wider Setting

The wider setting of the site is rural in nature and contributes to its heritage significance through:

- The presence of historic farm buildings
- Open views and agricultural land
- The dispersed settlement pattern along Ashbourne Road

There are no conservation area designations directly affecting the site; however, the rural character of the area is an important contextual consideration.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

The proposals have been assessed against the following policy framework:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – Section 16: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment
- Relevant Local Plan policies relating to:
    - Design quality
    - Protection of heritage assets
    - Development within rural settings

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The NPPF requires that development affecting heritage assets should:

- Preserve or enhance their significance
- Avoid or minimise harm
- Take opportunities to improve the quality of the built environment

DESCRITPION OF EMERGING PROPOSAL

The proposed development comprises:

- The removal of the existing conservatory
- The construction of a single-storey side extension

The proposed extension, as illustrated on the submitted plans and elevations and, will:

- Be of single-storey height with a gable roof form
- Be positioned to the side of the existing building
- Use black cladding to create a contemporary yet recessive appearance
- Incorporate a feature window reflecting a modern agricultural design language

The extension has been designed as a clearly legible addition, distinct from the original building which cannot be seen from the road.
.
The design approach draws on a comparable and approved scheme at Stoneburton, Ashbourne Road, Kirk Langley, which incorporates a similar contemporary extension.



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PRELIMINARY HERITAGE IMPACT CONSIDERATIONS

Impact on the Host Building

The proposal will result in the removal of a modern conservatory that detracts from the building's character.

Its replacement with a well-designed extension will:

- Improve the architectural coherence of the building
- Reinforce its agricultural character through a simple gabled form
- Maintain the legibility of the original structure

The proposed extension is clearly subordinate in scale and does not compete with the primary form of the building.

Design and Materials

The use of black cladding and a contemporary design approach ensures that:

- The extension is visually distinct from the historic fabric
- There is no attempt to replicate or dilute the original character
- The addition reads as a modern intervention

This approach aligns with best practice in heritage design, which promotes honest and legible additions.





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Impact on Setting

The extension is modest in scale and located to the side of the building.
As such:

- It will have limited visibility within the wider landscape
- It will not disrupt key views or the rural character of the area
- It will remain read as part of a domestic curtilage rather than an expansion of built mass

The proposal therefore preserves the character of the wider setting.

Comparative Context

A comparable extension has been approved at Stoneburton, Ashbourne Road, Kirk Langley, demonstrating that:

- Contemporary extensions of this nature are considered acceptable within the local context
- The design approach is consistent with emerging patterns of development in the area

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Level of Harm

In accordance with the NPPF:

- The proposal results in no harm to designated heritage assets
- It results in no harm, and a likely enhancement, to the significance of the non-designated heritage asset

The removal of the existing conservatory represents a clear improvement.

CONCLUSION

This Heritage Impact Assessment has demonstrated that:

- The Coach House is a non-designated heritage asset of local significance
- The existing conservatory detracts from the building's character
- The proposed extension is modest, well-designed and appropriate to its context

The development will:

- Enhance the architectural quality of the building
- Preserve its historic character and rural setting
- Align with national and local planning policy

Overall, the proposal represents a sensitive and positive intervention that will improve the character and appearance of the property without causing harm to heritage significance.

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