

BRYNGLAS HOUSE: DEMOLITION OF ANNEXE BUILDING

HERITAGE IMPACT STATEMENT

Incorporating Design & Access Statement

Newport City Council

20/06/25

Issue 02

Table of Contents

1.0. Introduction.....2

2.0. The Site: Brief Description, History and Significance.....8

3.0. Schedule of Proposed Works and Justification10

4.0. Impact11

5.0. Consultation.....11

6.0. Summary.....11

7.0. Design and Access Statement12

Appendix A – Listing Description (Brynglas House)13

Appendix B – Listing Description (Brynglas Gardens)16

Appendix C – Site Plan18



1.0. Introduction

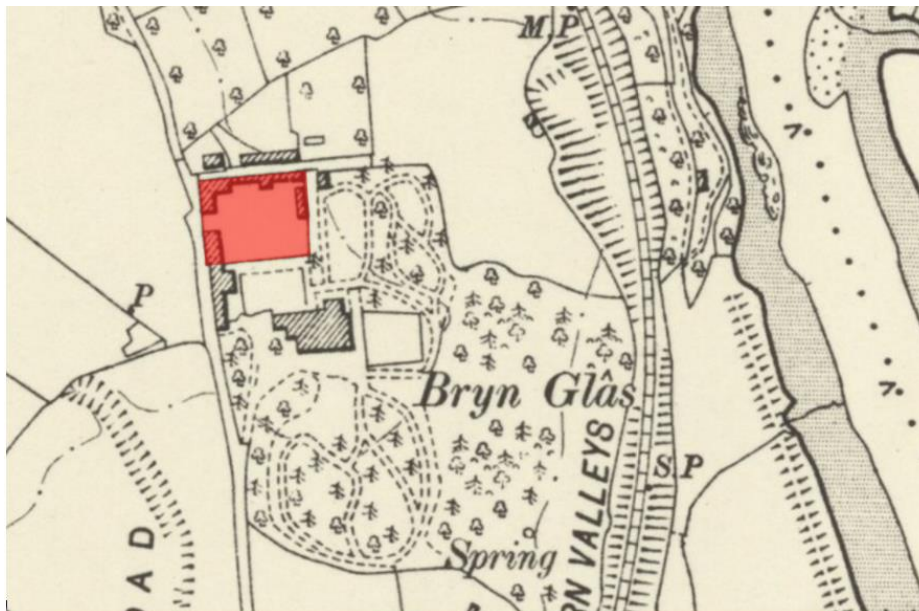
1.1. Site Address:

Brynglas House
Millbrook School
Brynglas Road
Newport
Gwent
NP20 5QU

- 1.2. Context: Brynglas House is a grade II listed Georgian/Victorian mansion (a copy of Cadw's Listing description is attached to this statement at Appendix 'A'). Originally built in 1834 for Edward and John Alfrey who owned the brewery housed in Newport Castle, the building was substantially rebuilt in 1874 by Thomas Cordes MP.

The site Brynglas House sits in is on the Registered Park and Garden list and designated grade II (a copy of Cadw's Listing description is attached to this statement at Appendix 'B'). The garden is a late nineteenth century formal and informal garden with ornamental tree and shrub planting.

The main house (Brynglas House) was used as a hospital during the First World War, before becoming a school and then, since 1977, an adult training facility. However, due to repeated lead theft and associated health and safety risks, Brynglas House has been vacant since July 2022. In that time, the building has rapidly fallen into a state of disrepair. Prolonged water-ingress and an absence of heating has resulted in significant dry rot and mould outbreaks. In places, internal joinery has warped, ceilings have cracked and cornicing collapsed. Consequently, the heritage interest and significance of the building and the wider site is under threat. A situation presently compounded by the lack of an alternative use for the main building.



Left: OS plan of Brynglas House and gardens (1888-1913) - former kitchen walled garden hatched in red.

- 1.3. This document sets out a scheme to demolish the annexe building, and its associated path, and restore this area of the site with a tarmac hard play surface.

Please refer to the attached site plan [Appendix 'C'], which shows the location of the annexe building and its context with the surrounding buildings, and their relationship with the main house (Brynglas House).

1.4. It is the applicant's intention to demolish a dangerous building (the annexe building). Serendipitously, this provides an opportunity to remove a structure which is detrimental to the character and significance of the site and should never have been built. The provision of a tarmac hard play surface will provide social benefits to Millbrook school, who have limited play space on the site.

1.5. *"The walled kitchen garden lies immediately to the N of the house, on ground sloping gently down towards the E. It is rectangular, bounded on its N, E and part of its W (N end) sides by a stone wall c. 3 m. high. The wall, which is overgrown with ivy in places, survives to its full height on the N, but stretches of the top on the E side are ruinous. A whitewashed stretch in the middle of the E side (interior) indicates where a greenhouse formerly stood. There is a door in the N side. A modern school building stands along the s and w sides.*

The 1890 Sale Particular plan shows the garden divided into four quarters by paths (gravel), with glasshouses along the inside of the N wall (outside were garden sheds and a gardener's house, now a private house), and outside the w wall. These have all disappeared, as has the interior layout." (Cadw/ ICOMOS Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in Wales – Site Dossier (1990).

The boundary walls of the kitchen garden, bar the southern extent, have survived but are obscured by thick vegetation cover. Newport City Council's (NCC) Tree Team have been consulted to ascertain whether this can be 'thinned out' and very-low quality trees felled, ecological surveys notwithstanding. More detailed inspection of these walls can then be carried out to establish their current condition and maintenance needs.

Previous applications for the site

1.6. Listed Building Consent was granted in 2025 for roof works to the main house – *replacement of stolen roof lead with alternative materials (mineral felt and lead alternative Wakaflex); reaffix slipped slates and replace broken ones; overhaul rainwater goods; repair roof lantern; and remove redundant fixings, cables etc.* Application reference 25/0046.

1.7. Condition survey

Cambria (structural engineers) were engaged in 2024 to carry out a comprehensive assessment of the annexe building following the discovery of a dropped/decayed beam and post connection in one of the classrooms. Subsequent investigations of the rest of the building revealed an inherent design defect with the structure of the building. This had been compounded by later ill-conceived window replacements and prolonged ponding of water on the roof, which have collectively undermined its structural strength.



Above: 'dropped' beam with tarpaulin to contain water-ingress

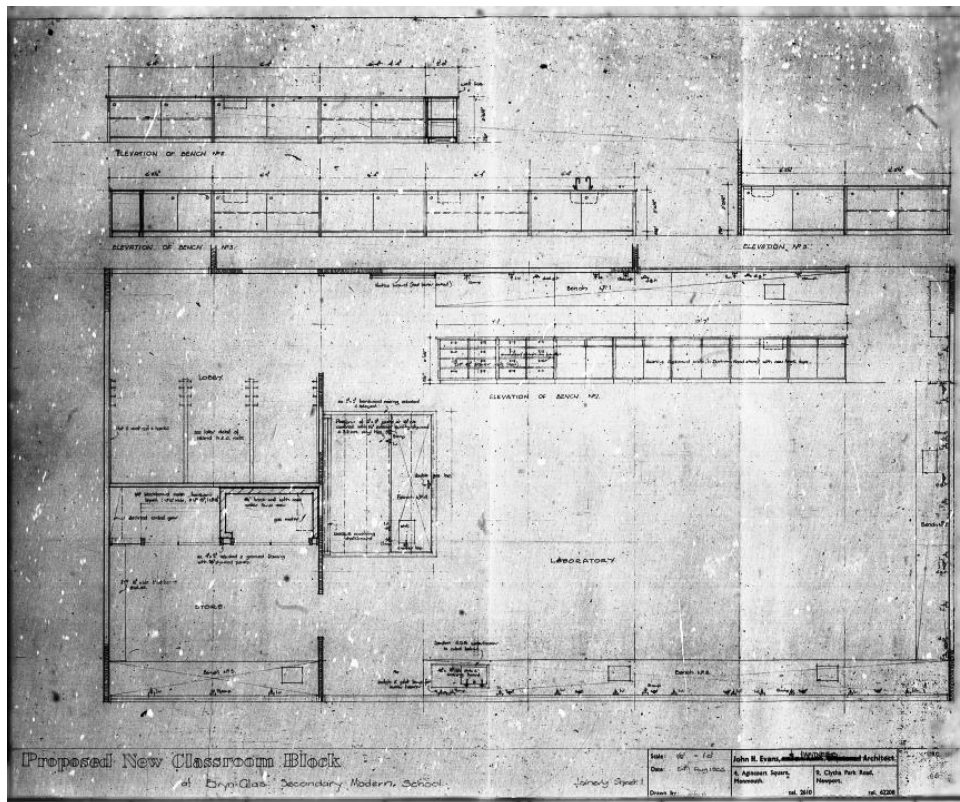


Above: external opening-up works of typical beam-post connection, revealing extent of movement

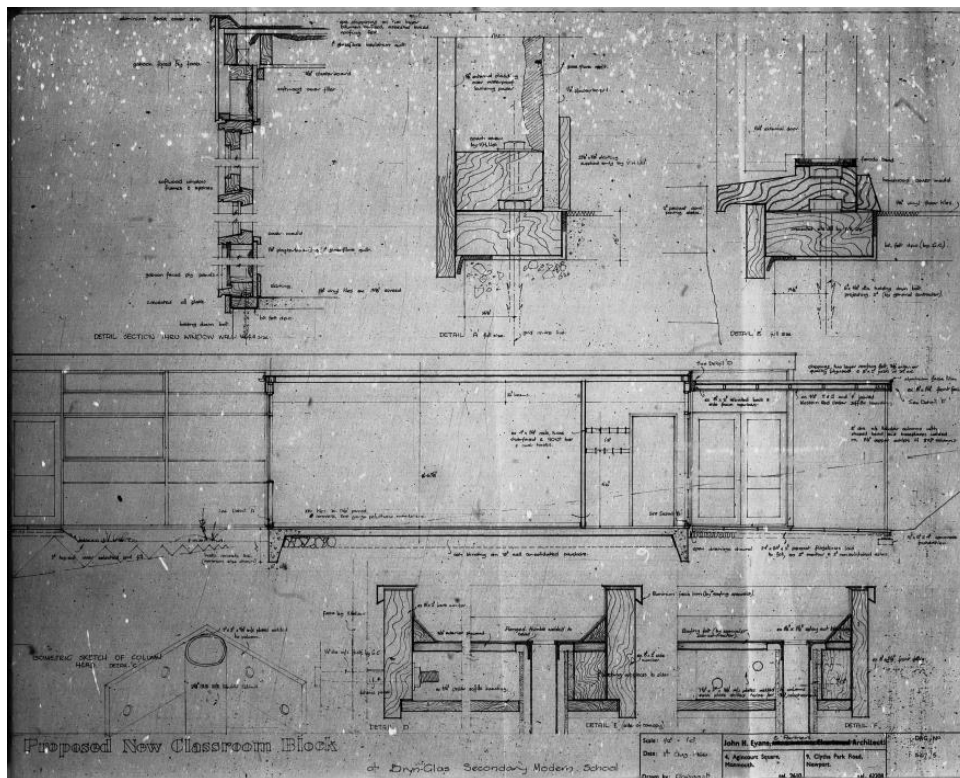


Left: Significant ponding on annexe roof (2024)

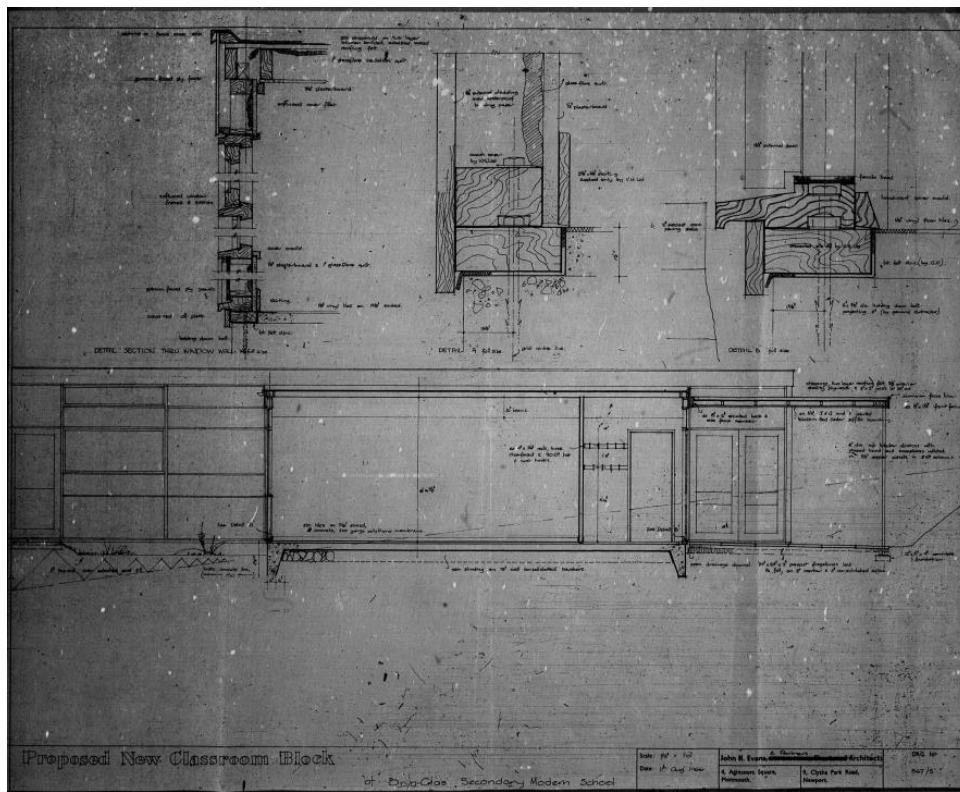
1.8. Previous records of this building are sparse and consist of the following construction drawings:



Left: proposed new top block plan (1966)



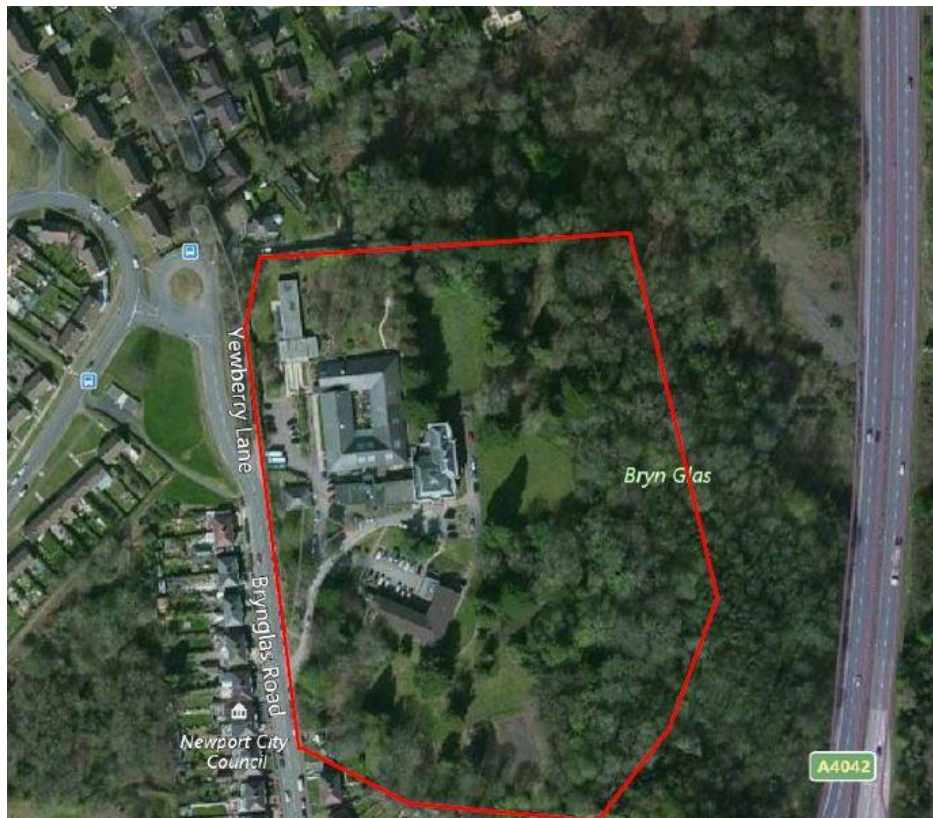
Left: proposed new top block details (1966)



Left: proposed window sections (1966)

2.0. The Site: Brief Description, History and Significance

- 2.1. The site sits on the north side of Newport in a residential area. To the north of the site is Brynglas Gardens, which is grade II listed and is probably the original gardener's dwelling for Brynglas House. To the west is Brynglas Road; to the south, Brynglas Avenue; and to the east is an area planted with substantial trees. Beyond this is the A4042, which runs at this point adjacent to the river Usk.



Above: Recent satellite plan of the Brynglas House site.

2.2. The main building (no work currently proposed):

Cadw consider grade II buildings "...of special interest which justify every effort being made to preserve them." Brynglas House has been included in this category due to it being "...an early Victorian mansion with added historical interest for its connections with the Alfrey and Cordes families. Group value with Brynglas Gardens adjacent."

2.3. Adult Training Centre (no work currently proposed):

Constructed in the 1970s as an adult training centre, the building is presently used as a temporary home for Millbrook Primary School and contributes little to the setting of Brynglas House. It is comprised of brickwork walls with modern windows, under a plain tile (possibly asbestos cement) roof.

2.4. Hostel/ Respite Care Building (no work currently proposed):

Also purpose-built in the 1970s as a hostel, this pale brick and rendered building does little to enhance or compliment the site. It is currently unoccupied since it is surplus to requirement.

2.5. Bungalow at the site entrance (no work currently proposed):

Another 1970s construction, which makes a negative contribution to Brynglas House and its gardens. Originally built as the caretaker's house, it presently sits in social services property portfolio. It is comprised of dark brick under an asbestos tile roof.

2.6. Millbrook Primary School annexe building/ Top Block (**demolition proposed**):

The annexe building is of lightweight demountable construction and sits on the site of the original walled kitchen garden. The building's main core was built in the late 1960s as an additional classroom block when the site housed Brynglas Central School. At some stage, a sizeable extension of similar construction – painted joinery and low-level infill panels – has been added to the north elevation. Prior to Millbrook Primary School's relocation to the site, this building was used for day services. The school then utilised it as a teaching space until they vacated in early 2024 because of concerns over its poor structural condition. Like the other curtilage structures, this building does little to enhance or compliment the site.



Left: typical elevation finish (2024)

- 2.7. Significance: According to Elisabeth Whittle, Cadw, Brynglas gardens are listed on account of their “*survival within urban area of late 19th century large garden with ornamental tree and shrub planting.*” (Cadw/ ICOMOS Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in Wales – Site Dossier (1990).

Significance Values

- Evidential value: **LOW**
The annexe building has low evidential value as a modern building constructed in the late 1960s. The building occupies the site of the former walled kitchen garden, which was laid out, along with the rest of the gardens, in the late nineteenth century and may have related archaeological potential.
- Historical value: **MEDIUM**
The annexe building has medium historical value, as a relatively modern building typical of the plain and inexpensive proprietary buildings that were constructed during post-war austerity in response to increasing educational demand.
- Aesthetic value: **LOW**

The annexe building has low aesthetic value and, like most modular system buildings of the period, is simple and utilitarian. A box-like structure with walls of glass, to permit generous amounts of daylight, it eschews any of the ornamental details that contribute to the aesthetic value of the main house. In recent years it has been extensively refaced with new glazing and panels, leaving little evidence of its as-designed form.

- Communal value: **MEDIUM**

The building was originally designed and used as an additional classroom block for Brynglas Central School. It was later used for day services and, more recently, as a classroom block for Millbrook School following their relocation to the site. Due to these uses, the building and wider site will be part of the memory of those who have taught and learnt within it, with the more recent memories being the strongest.

3.0. Schedule of Proposed Works and Justification

[Proposed works in black text, justification in blue]

Summary of Works:

- Demolition of Millbrook Primary School annexe building/ top Block; and
- Restoration of the cleared site with a tarmac hard play surface.

3.1. Demolition of annexe building/ top block:

3.1.1. The entirety of the building is to be demolished and footings removed. An internal soft strip will be carried out prior to external demolition.

This work is necessary since this building is at the end of its serviceable life. This type of construction has an estimated lifespan of twenty-five years; the annexe building has exceeded this by no small margin. A building-wide structural assessment in 2024 concluded that the building was not safe for continued occupation. As a temporary safeguard, the roof has been extensively propped throughout with Acrow props.

3.1.2. The existing footpath leading to the annexe building will be retained to provide access to the new tarmac hard play surface.

3.1.3. The existing surface water drainage system will be retained to efficiently discharge water away and thus prevent flooding.

3.2. Restoration of the cleared site with a tarmac hard play surface:

3.2.1. The area occupied by the annexe building is to be made good with a tarmac hard play surface installation following demolition.

This work is desired to provide a larger play area for the children of Millbrook Primary School, who have had to make do with a much smaller site since their former home in Bettws was condemned.

4.0. Impact

- 4.1. The proposed works will make a positive contribution in enhancing the heritage values and significance of Brynglas gardens and the main house (Brynglas House). The proposed works have been considered carefully in accordance with relevant heritage guidance and the established legislative framework.
- 4.2. The existing annexe building is poor quality and a negative feature, which detracts from the character, appearance and significance of the site and Brynglas House.
- 4.3. There will be a beneficial impact from the removal of a negative and inappropriate form of development within the setting of Brynglas House, which makes no contribution to its significance.
- 4.4. The tarmac hard play surface will only occupy the footprint of the existing building and it is envisaged that one day this could be easily returned to grass when the site is no longer required as a school.
- 4.6. There will be a negligible impact on communal value with the loss of a classroom block that formed a part of Brynglas Central School. However, this is offset by social benefits that the tarmac hard play surface will afford the children of Millbrook School.
- 4.7. Overall, the proposed demolition would have a beneficial effect on the setting and no impact on the significance of Brynglas House.

5.0. Consultation

- 5.1. This application has been prepared with great care and has been submitted following pre-application consultation with Laura Smith, Principal Heritage Officer to Newport City Council (NCC).
- 5.3. Newport Norse discussed the works with Laura Smith during a site visit on 11th March 2025 where she gave specific advice on the level of information that would be required in support of an application for such works.

6.0. Summary

- 6.1. We believe that the proposed works are necessary to remove the risk that this building presently poses. These have been carefully thought through with due regard for national, and local, planning and heritage policy and guidance.
- 6.2. The overall aim of the proposals is to ensure that the annexe building is carefully removed and the children of Millbrook School are provided with additional space to play and exercise outdoors.

7.0. Design and Access Statement

7.1. Layout

The property is to be demolished. The extent and impact of the proposed works has been addressed in the preceding parts of the Heritage Impact Statement.

7.2. Character & Appearance

The proposed works have a beneficial impact upon the character and appearance of Brynglas House and the grounds. It is envisaged that they will enhance the present site.

7.3. Scale

The property is to be completely demolished.

7.4. Environmental Sustainability

Building materials, where possible, will be recycled.

7.5. Community Safety

The demolition area will be safely cordoned-off to preserve community safety.

7.6. Community Involvement

The proposed works will have no impact on community involvement.

7.7. Access

The proposed works will have no impact on access.

Appendix A – Listing Description (Brynglas House)

Full Report for Listed Buildings



Summary Description of a Listed Buildings

Reference Number	Building Number	Grade	Status	Date of Designation	Date of Amendment
3003		II	Designated	02/05/1980	28/08/2001

Name of Property	Address
Brynglas House	

Location

Unitary Authority	Community	Town	Locality	Easting	Northing
Newport	Shaftesbury	Newport	Brynglas	331084	190201

Street Side	Location
E	On high ground overlooking Newport to S. Still in extensive grounds which slope S and eastwards down to the banks of the River Usk. Now surrounded by 19th and 20th century urban development.

Description

Broad Class	Period
Domestic	

Originally built in 1834 for Edward and John Alfrey who owned the brewery housed in Newport Castle. House was substantially rebuilt in 1877 by Thomas Cordes MP for Newport and it remained in the family until 1890. Used as hospital during the 1914-18 First World War and purchased by Newport Council in 1922 for use as school. Still in Council ownership, it has been a Community Centre since 1974. Malpas Tithe Map of 1840 shows Bryn Glas as a large roughly rectangular house with a W rear range. The OS map surveyed 1881 shows it as roughly U-shaped with the E garden frontage as the central section, the grounds descending to the Great Western Region Railway, the Monmouthshire section of the Eastern Valleys Line running alongside the River Usk. The rear service wing including kitchen and servants quarters was demolished. Photograph of 1890 shows the central section originally had balustraded parapets at main roof level and to the canted bays, with pediment heads over the 2nd and 5th upper floor windows, and further stacks.

Exterior

Classical mansion. Two storeys. Originally of stucco with ashlar dressings, now wholly painted. Very shallow pitched hipped roof of Welsh slate with central narrow rectangular stack, only readily visible above E elevation. Entrance frontage to S: a central canted bay with windows to each face, flanked on each side by a single window range. Raised end pilasters, corniced parapet and platband separating the storeys. Central flat-roofed portico in front of a round-arched moulded doorway, with entablature, slender Ionic columns and rear pilasters. Wide single storey ground floor bay projects to left. Original glazing was 12 pane-sashes with slender glazing bars, narrow sills; some glazing altered.

Extensive E-facing garden frontage. Central projecting 6-window range - three 12-pane windows each above two wide canted ground floor bays with large sash windows, tripartite to centre, some glazing bars lost. The bays are separated by a narrow round-arched niche. At each end are bowed 3-window ranges of large first floor 12-pane sashes and long full-height ground floor 15-pane sashes. End pilasters, platband and shallow roof cornice and parapet. N-facing elevation has a similar 3-window range of large sashes.

Interior

In spite of later institutional use, interior contains a range of C19 fittings and furnishings, including shutters to almost all the windows, panelled reveals, door surrounds with paterae, decorative plasterwork, marble fireplaces. The 5-sided porch has an encaustic tiled floor and the glazed lobby entrance has decorative plasterwork of side pilasters with egg and dart cornice and narrow Ionic scrolls, acanthus leaf coving and anthemion cornice to the ceiling. The main hall has a wider coloured range of decorative floor tiles, similar plasterwork, piers with similar narrow capitals. Corridor with a series of heavy moulded bracketed plaster arches gives access to the main reception rooms of the garden frontage; panelled cupboards on the inner rear wall. Room 1(former library) with front and garden elevations has decorative plasterwork cornice, panelled reveals and shutters to the long windows of the bowed garden wall. Room 1A on the other side of the hall (former morning room) has bay window to front and door to former conservatory to side; some modest decorative plasterwork. Room 2 (former music room) has an elaborate and delicate gilded and painted wooden chimney-piece incorporating mirrors resting on a white heavily carved marble fireplace; the painted decoration here and on the ceiling is derived from Roman classical motifs popular in the late C18-early C19 Pompeian style, also a 3-banded ceiling cornice of classical motifs. The window bay recess is framed by fluted columns with Ionic capitals and pilasters against the wall; low panelled dado and entablature over door. Coffee bar (former dining room) has an elaborate heavily carved brown/grey marble fireplace incorporating pre-Raphaelite style tiles, heavy billet-moulded cornice and heavy brackets to the bay window recess. Room 3 to rear was butler's pantry. Room 4 at end (former

billiard room) has two frontages and is at a lower level; former dressing room off.

Open well staircase of dark wood with twisted balusters and decorative treads ends rises to a landing newel under an arcade of 3 round-headed arches and round columns with shallow capitals and similar cornice. Tall round-arched staircase window with fluted surround and brackets and millennium glazing. Main first floor rooms lead off the L-shaped landing/corridor. These have less elaborately moulded plasterwork and mainly plain pale marble classical style fireplaces; smaller former service rooms off rear passage.

Reason for designation

Listed as an early Victorian mansion with added historical interest for its connections with the Allfrey and Cordes families. Group value with Brynglas Gardens adjacent.

Appendix B – Listing Description (Brynglas Gardens)

Full Report for Listed Buildings					
Summary Description of a Listed Buildings					
Reference Number	Building Number	Grade	Status	Date of Designation	Date of Amendment
3002		II	Designated	05/02/1980	28/08/2001
Name of Property		Address			
Brynglas Gardens					
Location					
Unitary Authority	Community	Town	Locality	Easting	Northing
Newport	Shaftesbury	Newport	Brynglas	331015	190310
Street Side		Location			
E		On high ground just N of Brynglas house with gardens sloping down eastwards towards the River Usk			
Description					
Broad Class		Period			
Domestic					
History					
Cottages ormes were popular from around 1800-1840, a number of designs dating from the early 1800s - estate cottages built in whimsical style to enhance the surroundings of the great house. This was traditionally the gardener's cottage to Brynglas House, the latter originally built 1834. However it also may relate to a no longer existing house on the banks of the Usk, Pill House on Malpas Pill off the Usk River with drive and turning circle on the W bank of the Usk. The cottage is shown in the Malpas Tithe of 1840 as					

within the same block of land as Pill House, though the apportionment shows both Pill House and Brynglas House owned by the Allfrey/Allfray family and occupied by the Cordes family. Separating the cottage from Brynglas House is a high stone garden wall. A separate long building no longer extant is shown to NE on the Tithe Map of 1840 and a long range against the wall, probably glasshouses or potting sheds, on the OS first edition map surveyed 1886.

Exterior

Cottage orne. Of rendered stone with raised rockfaced lias quoins and window surrounds; Welsh slate roof with terracotta ridges radiating from a central brick stack; full dormers with terracotta finials. Single storey and attic. An originally cruciform plan but with non-matching elevations and window heights; single storey extensions. N and S elevations have windows on 2 storeys; to S the ground floor window in the shallow projecting bay is blind, creating a niche. Latticed iron casement windows with gothick glazing bars and diamond quarries to the pointed arches.

Interior

Interior reported as completely remodelled following period of dereliction.

Reason for designation

Listed as an interesting survival of a nationally fairly uncommon building type. Group value with the main house.

Appendix C – Site Plan

