HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE STATEMENT:

THE HOP POLE INN, WOODS HILL, LIMPLEY STOKE, WILTS BA2 7FS



Fig. 1 : The Hop Pole Inn c. 1910 [photograph courtesy of freshford.com]

Rev. 2.0 : Nov, 2023

By Andrew Foyle

andrewfoyle1@gmail.com

16 Lydstep Terrace, Southville, Bristol BS3 1DR *Mob: 07881 580520*

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James Sibson and the Limpley Stoke Community Benefit Society Ltd; the staff of Wiltshire History Centre; Mrs Diana George, nee Shore, who lived at the pub 1958-76; Linda Hall and Paul Geoffrey Wheeler [Medieval and Tudor Buildings research group].

CHANGE CONTROL

Rev. 0.0 May, 2022 – First issue.
Rev. 1.0 January 2023 - Second Issue
Rev. 2.0 November 2023 - Third Issue - Amendments by James Sibson

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REVISIONS

Rev 1.0 - Appendix A Added

Rev 2.0 - P9 - 1.5 – Key finding updated / P34 – note about spring enhanced / P36 - 4.4 – Phasing diagram updated to reflect new understanding
P37 to P45 – new photos and added detail to phasing descriptions / P53 – phase 5 - updated to add period of photo under fig.35.
P63 – Phase 8 – updated to collect kitchen rebuilding. / P54 – 5.4 – Significance description added to.
P72 – Fig.44 – Significance Plan updated to match description

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1. Scope

This purpose of this report is to set out the history and evolution of the Hop Pole Inn at Limpley Stoke, and thence to identity its Heritage Significance. It will deal with the building's long history as a pub from before 1841 identifying all known owners and occupants, and tying those to archival references principally in the Newspaper Archive online, but also to photographs, plans and archival documents at Wiltshire History Centre. A separate section will outline the archaeological evolution and phasing of the building to identify and date significant features where possible.

1.2. Background

The Hop Pole Inn has served as a pub for the village since at least 1841, and probably significantly before that. For many decades it was one of two pubs in the village, the other being the Rose and Crown sitting just below the A36 Bath to Warminster Road higher up the valley. However the Hop Pole is much more central, being situated on Lower Stoke, the lowest road along the west side of the Avon valley through the village, and very close to the historic centre - the Manor House, former textile mill and the Limpley Stoke Brewery were all within 100 metres. The Hop Pole also benefitted from being close to the railway station, until its closure in 1966. Since c.1980, the village has lost its other pub, post office, village shop, two restaurants and a hotel. Its only amenity and meeting point is a village hall.

After years of declining business, changes of tenant and an unrealistic renovation attempt by the most recent tenant, the Hop Pole finally closed in 2018. It has since lain empty, suffering significant deterioration as a result. The pub had been registered as an Asset of Community Value [ACV] before it closed, and this was renewed in autumn 2018 to prevent it lapsing. In January 2020 the owners, the Wellington Pub Company, issued a Notice of Disposal, giving six months for the local community to submit a bid to purchase. In Summer 2020 the Parish Council submitted a bid of £218,000 to buy the pub and run it as a community resource; this bid was rejected. The freehold was then put up for sale on the open market at £325,000 but no buyer was found by July 23, 2021. This triggered the right for a Community Body to give notice to Wiltshire Council of its intention to make a bid by 8th September 21. The Limpley Stoke Community Benefit Society Ltd. [LSCBS] was formed in August 2021 and a campaign began to encourage villagers to invest in shares in the company. A 'full

moratorium' period prevented any sale before 28 January 2022, allowing time to raise funding and put together a credible bid to buy the asset. Although a developer was waiting 'in the wings' intending to purchase and redevelop the property as a residential dwelling, when fundraising reached £500,000 the LSCBS bid was successful and the purchase was completed in the early Spring of 2022.

The LSCBS will refurbish the Hop Pole Inn to a sufficient standard to attract a professional tenant who will run it as a pub and restaurant, providing an amenity for local residents and visitors to the area alike. The funding model will allow the society to charge a lower rent than a commercial freeholder, in return requiring the tenant to provide some other services not currently available within walking distance of the village. However there are structural repairs and changes needed to make the building function for this new use, and the purpose of this report is to identify and date the elements of the structure and interiors that constitute the building's heritage significance.

1.3 Commissioning

This report was commissioned through James Sibson for the Limpley Stoke Community Benefit Society Ltd., in order to inform and support a proposed Listed Buildings Application for refurbishment of the pub.

1.4 About the Author

Andrew Foyle has a Masters Degree in British Architectural History from the Courtauld Institute of Art (1999) and has published two volumes for Pevsner Architectural Guides series [*Bristol*, 2004; and *Somerset North and Bristol*, 2011 in the Buildings of England series]. Andrew has over 20 years' experience in dealing with the historic built environment including Listed Buildings casework for Historic England; development of Conservation Area Character Appraisals for Bath; research and authorship of Heritage Statements, Statements of Significance and Heritage Impact Assessments.

1.5 Summary

The report identifies the building history of the site (Section 4.0) including occupation history and structural analysis with phases and dating. In section 5.0 the Heritage Significance is identified and discussed.

The key findings are :

- The earliest dateable features are two beams of c. 1550 – 1625. The walls of the western end of the building may be co-eval with the beams, or may represent earlier work into which the beams were inserted as an alteration.
- The beams were assessed for dendrochronology however all were noted to be of Elm and as such not dateable by this method.
- The main walls, including the east gable are built of earth mortar, discovered during repair works in 2023. A vernacular tradition and rare survivor, the use of a lime free, pure earth mortar is little known in the area and supports an early date for the walls.
- The building reached its present form in the 17th and early 18th century, achieving by the latter date a two room plan with a central through passage formed as a result of the insertion of a chimney, and probably three bedrooms on the first floor.
- It has been in use as a pub since at least 1841 [earliest public record], and perhaps significantly before due to the ownership and operation in connection with an adjacent brew house.
- Between c. 1875 and 1908 it underwent significant modernisations with a complete new roof, rear extensions and reconfiguration internally provide a three room plan with a kitchen for the landlord's private use, and a smoking room or parlour behind the main bar.
- Further reconfigurations were undertaken by the brewery owners [Simonds of Reading, then Courages] in 1950 and 1977. At the latter date the upper floor was reconfigured as a private flat, marking the point when the whole ground floor was given over to pub use.
- There is now scope for rationalising the plan with features or low or negative significance obscuring the positive aspects of the building.

2.0 POLICY FRAMEWORK, METHODOLOGY AND SOURCES

2.1 In relation to heritage assets the following policies and guidance are considered to be relevant when assessing the impact of the proposed development.

2.2 The report has been written in accordance with Historic England's current guidance as set out in *The Setting of Heritage Assets Historic Environment Good Practice Advice* in Planning Note 3 (2nd edition), Paragraph 189 of the NPPF and Government guidance in the *Planning Practice Guidance* (2019).

Planning Practice Guidance : Conserving & enhancing the historic environment sets out the main legislative framework for planning and the historic environment and states : 'Any decisions relating to listed buildings must address the statutory considerations of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (see in particular sections 16,66 and 72) as well as satisfying the relevant policies within the National Planning Policy Framework and the Local Plan'.

2.3 Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states 'In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or as the case may be, the Secretary of State, shall have regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses'.

2.4 National Planning Policy Framework, Section 16 : Conserving & enhancing the historic environment.

2.5 Historic England Guidance : Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning (Second Edition) 2017 : GPA2 'Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment' and GPA3 'The Setting of Heritage Assets'.
Guidance in GPA3 sets out a stepped approach to assessment :

- Step 1 : Identifying the heritage assets affected & their settings
- Step 2 : Assessing whether, how & to what degree settings make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s)
- Step 3 : Assessing the effect of the proposed development on the significance of the asset(s)
- Step 4 : Maximising enhancement & minimising harm
- Step 5 : Making & documenting the decision & monitoring outcomes

2.6 The assessment has been carried out in accordance with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (MHCLG 2019) and to standards specified by

- Historic England (HE 2017a, 2019)
- MHCLG 2019 [Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government], February 2019 National Planning Policy Framework
- Historic England, 2017a, The setting of heritage assets. Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3.
- Historic England, 2019, Advice note 12: Statements of Significance, Swindon.

2.8 Legislation

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 sets out the legal requirements for the control of development and alterations which affect listed buildings or conservation areas (including buildings of heritage interest which lie within a conservation area). Grade I are buildings of exceptional interest. Grade II* are particularly significant buildings of more than special interest. Grade II are buildings of special interest.

2.9 Planning framework

The Government issued a revised version of the NPPF in February 2019 (MHCLG 2019) and supporting revised Planning Practice Guidance in 2018 (MHCLG 2018). The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, and the NPPF has a presumption in favour of

such, where it meets needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Sustainable development is achieved within the context of economic, social and environmental objectives.

Section 16 of the NPPF deals with 'Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment'. The NPPF recognises that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource which 'should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations' (para 184).
The NPPF requires the significance of heritage assets to be considered in the planning process, whether designated or not.

2.10 Assessing heritage significance
The NPPF defines significance as "The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting. For World Heritage Sites, the cultural value described within each site's Statement of Outstanding Universal Value forms part of its significance."

The determination of the significance of a heritage asset (including archaeological remains) is based on statutory designation and/or professional judgement against the following values (or interests).

Historic interest: An interest in past lives and events (including pre-historic). Heritage assets can illustrate or be associated with them. Heritage assets with historic interest not only provide a material record of our nation's history, but can also provide meaning for communities derived from their collective experience of a place and can symbolise wider values such as faith and cultural identity.
Archaeological interest: There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.

Architectural and artistic interest: These are interests in the design and general aesthetics of a place. They can arise from conscious design or fortuitously from the way the heritage asset has evolved. More specifically, architectural interest is an interest in the art or science of the design, construction, craftsmanship and decoration of buildings and structures of all types. Artistic interest is an interest in other human creative skill, like sculpture.

In legislation and designation criteria, the terms 'special architectural or historic interest' of a listed building and the 'national importance' of a scheduled monument are used to describe the heritage asset's significance.

These interests are described in Historic England's guidance (Advice Note 12, Statements of Significance, 2019).

Historic interest: the ways in which the asset can illustrate the story of past events, people and aspects of life (illustrative value, or interest). It can be said to hold communal value when associated with the identity of a community. Historical interest considers whether the asset is the first, only, or best surviving example of an innovation of consequence, whether related to design, artistry, technology or social organisation. It also considers an asset's integrity (completeness), current use / original purpose, significance in place making, associative value with a notable person, event, or movement.

Archaeological interest: the potential of the physical remains of an asset to yield evidence of past human activity that could be revealed through future archaeological investigation. This includes above-ground structures and landscapes, earthworks and buried or submerged remains, palaeoenvironmental deposits, and considers date, rarity, state of preservation, diversity/complexity, contribution to published priorities (research value), supporting documentation, collective value and comparative potential, and sensitivity to change.

Architectural and artistic interest: derived from a contemporary appreciation of an asset's aesthetics. Architectural interest can include the design, construction, craftsmanship and decoration of buildings and structures. Artistic interest can include the use, representation or influence of historic places or buildings in artwork. It can also include the skill and emotional impact of works of art that are part of heritage assets or assets in their own right.

Historic England is required to consider these values when statutorily designating heritage assets. Assets are evaluated against the criteria listed above on a case by case basis. Unless the nature and exact extent of buried archaeological remains within any given area has been determined through prior investigation, significance is often uncertain.

In relation to designated heritage assets, the assessment considers the contribution which the historic character and setting make to the overall significance of the asset.

3.0 THE SITE ; LOCATION AND HERITAGE DESIGNATIONS

3.1 Location

Limpley Stoke lies within the county of Wiltshire. The local authority is Wiltshire County Council. The Hop Pole Inn lies at the foot of Woods Hill, on the north side of the T-junction of Woods Hill and Lower Stoke. Its National Grid Reference is: ST 78152 61055



Fig. 2 : Area Location (Know Your Place) Red plot boundary is indicative only

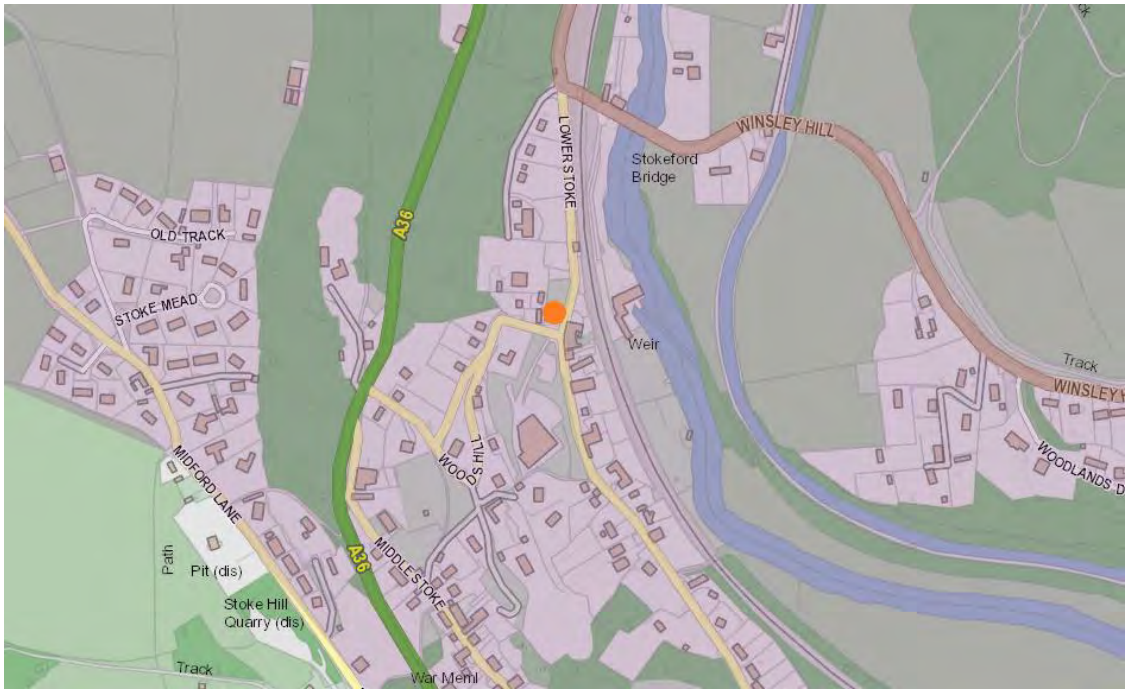


Fig. 3 : District Location (Know Your Place)



Fig. 4 : Site Boundary (Know Your Place) : red line boundary is indicative only

3.2 Heritage Designations

Limpley Stoke is not within a Conservation Area, and lies outside the boundary of the City of Bath World Heritage Site.

Listed Building official entry

Official list entry
Heritage Category: Listed Building
Grade: II
List Entry Number: 1021822
Date first listed: 14-Jun-1988
Statutory Address 1: THE HOP POLE INN, LOWER STOKE
The scope of legal protection for listed buildings
This List entry helps identify the building designated at this address for its special architectural or historic interest. Unless the List entry states otherwise, it includes both the structure itself and any object or structure fixed to it (whether inside or outside) as well as any object or structure within the curtilage of the building. For these purposes, to be included within the curtilage of the building, the object or structure must have formed part of the land since before 1st July 1948.
Location
Statutory Address: THE HOP POLE INN, LOWER STOKE
The building or site itself may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.
District: Wiltshire (Unitary Authority)
Parish: Limpley Stoke
National Grid Reference: ST 78152 61055
Details
ST 76 SE LIMPLEY STOKE LOWER STOKE (west side)
3/95 The Hop Pole Inn
GV II

Inn. C17, altered C19. Rubble stone, double Roman tiled roof with coped verges and stone stacks. Two-storey, 3-window. Large gabled stone porch with chamfered arched opening and two half-glazed inner doors, 3-light beaded mullioned casement with hoodmould to right, 2-light C19 mullioned casement ovolo-mullioned casement to left. First floor has two 3-light ovolo-mullioned casements and one 3- light beaded mullioned casement, all with hoodmoulds, eaves raised C19 and straight joint indicates left hand bay is addition. Lean- to extension to right return. Rear lean-to extensions. Interior altered.

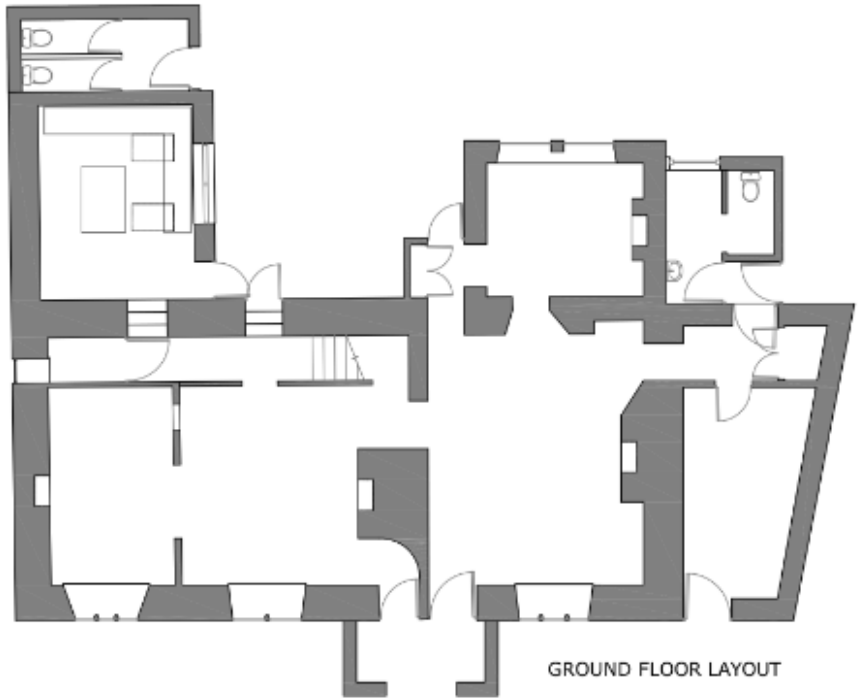
Listing NGR: ST7815261055
Legacy
The contents of this record have been generated from a legacy data system.
Legacy System number: 314543
Legacy System: LBS

4.0 BUILDING HISTORY

In general the earliest features of the Hop Pole seem to fall within the period of the Great Rebuilding as defined by W.G. Hoskins.[1] Hoskins dates the Great Rebuilding nationally to the years c. 1570-1640. However there are local variations, in the West Country it is generally held to occur slightly later. In this report references are made to Linda Hall's *Rural Houses of North Avon and South Gloucestershire* for comparison of plan forms and dated features. Her book does not cover the West Wiltshire area, the nearest examples from her study being in the parish of Wick & Abson about 15 miles north-east of Limpley Stoke. In the absence of any more local published study of vernacular buildings, we have assumed that this is a reasonably safe source for approximate comparison of dates and stylistic developments.

[1] Hoskins, W.G. (1953). "The Rebuilding of Rural England, 1570–1640", *Past and Present*, **4**: 44–59.

4.1 Current Plans



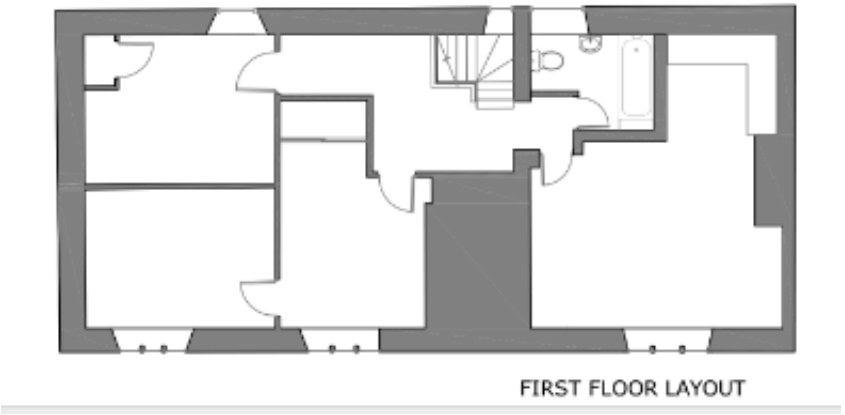


Fig. 5 [l.] : Current plan, ground floor

Fig. 6 [r.] : Current plan, first floor

4.2 OCCUPATION HISTORY

Early ownership

Several written histories of Limpley Stoke, and much oral history, describe the Hop Pole as 'medieval'; there is a widespread tradition that it was a stopping point for monks travelling to sell wine, some say from Hinton Charterhouse. This seemingly stems from a highly speculative passage in Richard Hooker's *A History of Limpley Stoke*, 1977, page 17. He states that

> *"there is said to have been a monks' wine house on the same site, in fact part of an older building exists today; the remains make up part of the back of the present inn. A monks' wine house, or resting place, could well have dated to about 1300! ".*

It is not clear what he thought he had seen, but no visible dateable features have been found anywhere in the structure earlier than the mid-1500s. This research cannot verify the oral tradition of a medieval building on the site, though neither should it be ignored.

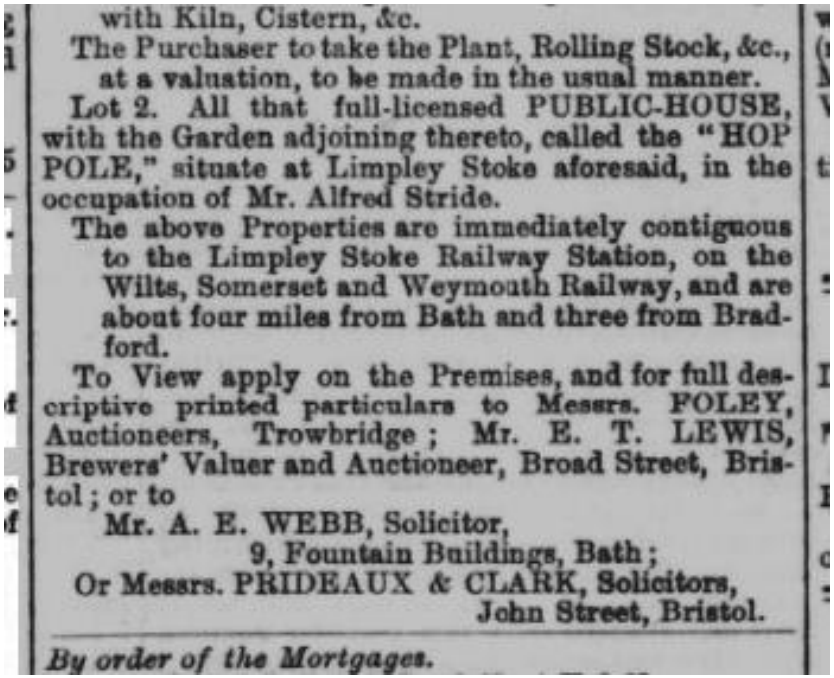
St Mary's church, Limpley Stoke is of Saxon foundation, with a narrow 11th century door resited in the nave arcade. The village was a tithing of the manor of Bradford on Avon, which was given by King Aethelred in 1001 to Shaftesbury Abbey and remained in its possession until the Dissolution. Limpley Stoke remained administratively part of Bradford until 1894 when the town was made an Urban District and its former tithings, including Limpley Stoke were split off as civil parishes.[2] Thus the property which is now the Hop Pole may have belonged to Shaftesbury Abbey until the 1530s. The earliest parts of the fabric, roughly the main walls west [uphill] of the porch, appear to predate alterations which can be dated to the 17th century; allowing the realistic prospect that parts at least of the western walls are 16th century or earlier. The only dateable features identified from this phase are two chamfer-stopped beams in the lounge bar [see p. 48], where the style of chamfer stop seems to occur in the West Country roughly 1550-1625, but the beams may have been inserted in earlier walls.

[2] https://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/wilts/vol7/pp4-51

Occupation from 1841

Research has revealed a number of known named occupants/landlords of the Hop Pole, the earliest being from the Tithe Apportionment of 1841, corroborated by the Census Return of the same year. It was already the Hop Pole Inn at this time, and may have been in use as an inn for many years before.

1841 - 1851	**John Sheppard** [45], his wife Ann [50], and their children Edwin 15, Alfred 13, and Sarah, 9, with John's stepdaughter Joyce Fisher [1814-48] and her 3 year-old daughter Sabina. Ann Sheppard had previously been married to a William Fisher, perhaps a relative of the brewery owners. [1841 census]. The name Hop Pole Inn was in use at this time.
1861	**Walter Lidyard** age 44 [born Claverton] with wife Ann, 52, and 2 children; Walter, 13, and Martha, 12.
1865	**William Stride** granted the transfer of the licence, March 1, 1865. [Wiltshire Independent]
1873	**Charles Stride** and his wife Sarah Ann kept the pub [Trowbridge Chronicle, Jan 3 1874; summons for assault on Sarah Stride]. Charles Stride had been a police constable at the time of his marriage in Bath, August 1871. The relationship between the various Strides associated with the Hop Pole has not been determined.
1876	**John Stride** is holding the licence [Wiltshire Times and Trowbridge Advertiser, April 1 and April 29, 1876.]
1876	**Alfred Stride** takes over the licence from John, April 29th.
1878	On November 27th 1878 the Limpley Stoke Brewery and Hop Pole went to auction together, as two lots. It is not known whether a buyer was found.



with Kiln, Cistern, &c.
The Purchaser to take the Plant, Rolling Stock, &c., at a valuation, to be made in the usual manner.
Lot 2. All that full-licensed PUBLIC-HOUSE, with the Garden adjoining thereto, called the "HOP POLE," situate at Limpley Stoke aforesaid, in the occupation of Mr. Alfred Stride.
The above Properties are immediately contiguous to the Limpley Stoke Railway Station, on the Wilts, Somerset and Weymouth Railway, and are about four miles from Bath and three from Bradford.
To View apply on the Premises, and for full descriptive printed particulars to Messrs. FOLEY, Auctioneers, Trowbridge; Mr. E. T. LEWIS, Brewers' Valuer and Auctioneer, Broad Street, Bristol; or to
Mr. A. E. WEBB, Solicitor,
9, Fountain Buildings, Bath;
Or Messrs. PRIDEAUX & CLARK, Solicitors,
John Street, Bristol.
By order of the Mortgagee.

Fig. 7 : Advertisement for the auction of the Hop Pole Inn, Wiltshire Times & Trowbridge Advertiser, November 23, 1878

1879 **William Henry Weston** took over the Hop Pole's licence from Alfred Stride. [Wiltshire Times, May 31, 1879.] He had served as a colour sergeant in the Royal Marines and came from Portsmouth. He held medals for long service and the Baltic campaign. He left the pub in 1883 and became sub-postmaster for Limpley Stoke, in premises opposite the Hop Pole. He retired in June 1914.

1883 – 1909 **James Male**

"The license of the Hop-pole Inn, Limpley Stoke, was transferred from William Henry Weston to James Male." [Wilts Times/Trowbridge Advertiser, Dec 27 1883. See also 29.11.83]. Male's wife Maria was W.H Weston's sister, making the two landlords brothers-in-law. Male

was probably the longest serving landlord in the last 200 hundred years, with 26 years at the Hop Pole. He also had an extremely interesting life story as a Crimea veteran, *see* Cultural Associations, section 5.1. In Kelly's Directory, 1889, he is also listed as cab proprietor.

1889 On June 24 1889, a prospectus was issued for the Bath Brewery Ltd., formed by six small breweries in Bath and its surroundings. One of these was Cumberland & Green, owners of the Limpley Stoke Brewery which had owned and run the Hop Pole for probably a century or more. The Hop Pole was transferred to the ownership of the Bath Brewery Company, until the latter's sale in 1923.[3]

1909 – 1912 **Ernest James Marchant**

Marchant took over the Licence from James Male on Jan 2, 1909. A receiving order was issued against him – i.e. preliminary bankruptcy proceedings – in October 1912 [The Scotsman, Oct 5 1912, reported from London Gazette], at which date the pub was advertised to let and said to be "doing fair trade" [Bath Chronicle, 5.10.1912].

1912 – 21 Unknown. [Alfred Fowles may have taken over the licence in 1912].

1921 – 1929? **Alfred Fowles or Vowles**

Most sources give the spelling as Fowles. Wiltshire Times, February 5 1921 refers to 'Vowles' as landlord of the Hop Pole, and Bath Brewery Company owning the two houses in Limpley Stoke, the Hop Pole and the Rose and Crown. Fowles objected to a drinks licence being issued to the Hydropathic Establishment at Limpley Stoke, [see also Wilts Times, Feb 1 1922.] Previous to this licence being issued, if Hydro guests wanted wine with their meals, they had to pay the waitress who then instructed the porter to walk across to the Hop Pole to buy it.

[3] Mike Bone, The Rise and Fall of Bath's Breweries, 1736-1960, pp.123-4 History of Bath, Vol.8 – 5.

In 1922 Mr Fowles objected to proposed change of Sunday licensing time, from 6-9pm to 7-10pm; Fowles testified that the hour from 6-7 on Sunday evenings was his busiest of the week, with fishermen having a drink while waiting for the trains back to Bath and Bristol. [Wiltshire Times Feb 4 1922] Several other reports name Fowles [e.g. Wilts Times Aug 7 1926].

1923 On June 15 1923, the Bath Brewery Company was sold for £160,000 at a special meeting at the Christopher Hotel, Bath, including 105 freehold and leasehold licensed premises. It is presumed the Hop Pole was among them. The buyer was **George's Brewery of Bristol**, however by 1937 the Hop Pole was owned by Rogers' Brewery; it seems likely that at some point c.1923-37 George's sold off some unwanted pubs.

1929 –1933 **Henry George Leakey**

Leakey was granted full transfer of licence of Hop Pole Inn, [Wilts Times, June 1, 1929.]

1933 –1934 **Herbert Sealey Burnell**

In October 1933 Burnell was granted full transfer of the licence from Henry Leakey. Burnell had previously been the landlord of the Millers' Arms near Chepstow for three years. [Wiltshire Times, October 28, 1933.]

1934 - 1935 **Vernon Michael Fouracre**

In February 1934 Fouracre was granted transfer of the licence. In August 1935, having been landlord for 18 months, he took on the licence of the New Inn, 50, Rivers Street, Bath. The Hop Pole licence was to be transferred temporarily to his wife and a helper. No objections were raised and this application presumably passed. [Bath Chronicle, August 31 1935]

1935 – 1937 **Frederick W. Childers**

By December 1935 Frederick Childers was the licence holder: he installed a new telephone line, the number being Limpley Stoke 148.

1935-8 Rogers's Brewery of Bristol was taken over by **H&G Simonds of Reading** in 1935, however its pubs continued to trade as Rogers's until 1938, when Rogers was declared bankrupt and the name ceased to be used. Photographs of the Hop Pole in the mid-20th century show it trading under the Simonds badge, which was appropriately a hop leaf.





Fig. 8 : Left; Simonds Hop Leaf logo

Fig. 9 : Right; The Hop Pole, 1953 [source; freshford.com]

1937 – c.1939 **David Edwards**

In February 1937 Edwards was granted the transfer of licence from Childers, the application being supported by the Brewery Company, Messrs Rogers of Bristol. [Wiltshire Times, February 6, 1937.] He had previously been a mining engineer in South Africa for 31 years.

Edwards vacated the Hop Pole for the licence of the New Inn, Southgate, Bath c. 1939. [Bath Chronicle, November 8, 1947, Death of Mrs M.A. Edwards.]

1940 Under new management, not named. In February an advert stated : "Hop Pole Inn, Limpley Stoke [new management]. A small hotel with every comfort. H&C in bedrooms etc." [Wiltshire Times. February 17, 1940]

1952 **Mrs Greta Mildred McKenna** passed a staff training examination Licensed House Staff Training –to gain a Licensed Trade Diploma [Somerset Guardian, Feb 29 1952.] It is not clear if she was a staff member or the licensee.

1958 – 1976 **Harold and Kath Shore** were landlords. Their daughter Diana contributed information to this report. See 1973 Advertisement below, also April 23 and October 29, 1976 [Somerset Standard]. An advert in the Somerset Standard [July 6 1962] names R. Shore as landlord, but the initial R is believed to be a misprint for H.[4]

1960 In 1960 Simonds Ltd were taken over by **Courage & Co. Ltd** to become a part of the new brewing company in Bristol.[5] George's in Bristol, which had briefly owned the Hop Pole in the 1920s, also became part of the new group. From 1960 the pub became a Courage house, and remained so until the 1990s.

1976/7 **---- Thomas** took over from the Shores, c. 1977.[6]

[4] Information from Diana George, daughter of Harold Shore.
[5] http://breweryhistory.com/wiki/index.php?title=The_Rogers_of_Bristol_Story
[6] Information from Diana George.

1996 The **Wellington Pub Company** bought the Hop Pole from Courages, and owned it until 2022.

2022 The **Limpley Stoke Community Benefit Society** purchased the pub.



Fig. 10 : Advertisement, Somerset Standard, July 27, 1973

4.3 MAP REGRESSION



Fig. 11 : Current Ordnance Survey map

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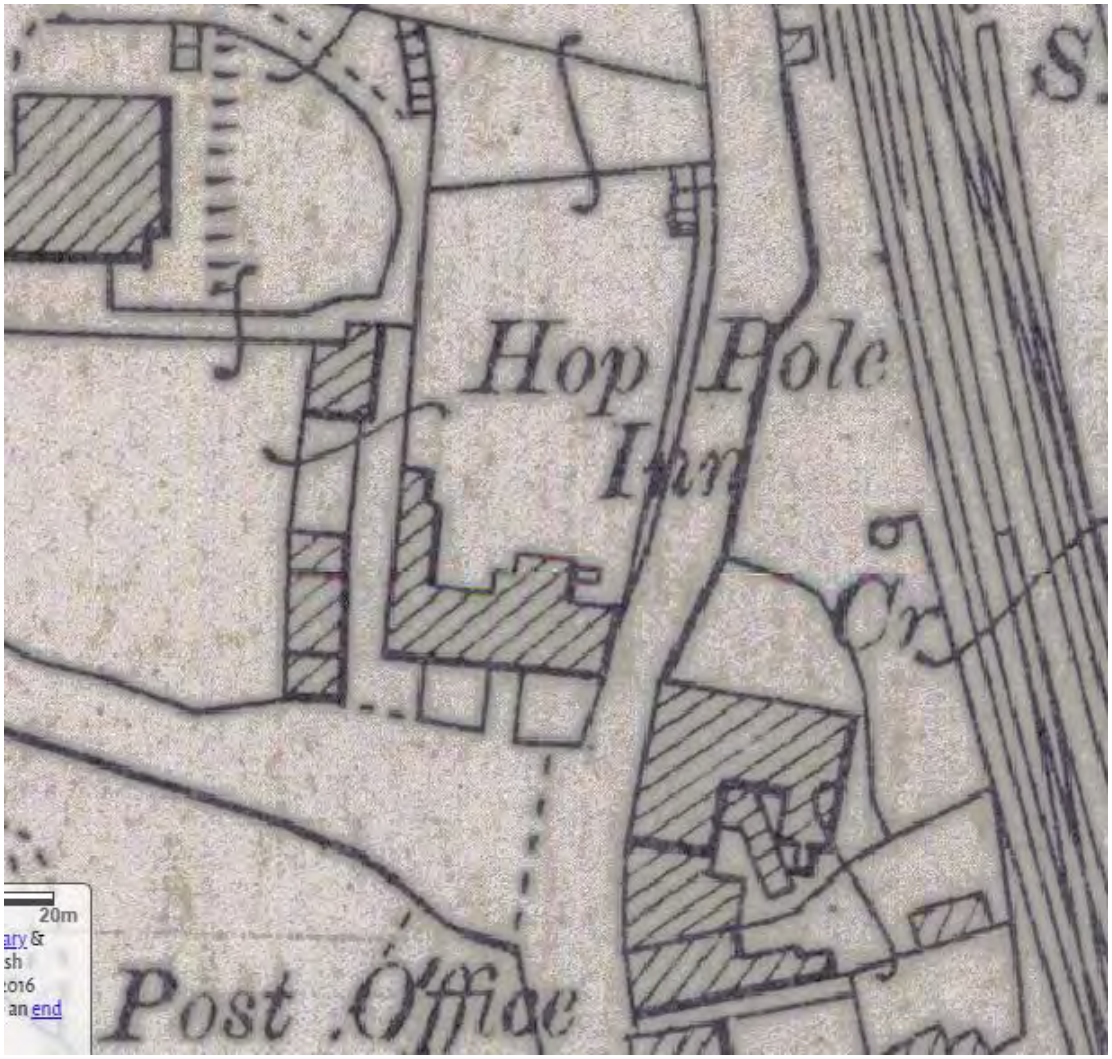

Fig. 12 : Ordnance Survey, 1894-1903 OS 25" 2nd Edition [1:2500 scale] Wiltshire XXXI.16 & 15 & XXXVIIIa.4, Revised: 1899, Published: 1901

This map shows the Hop Pole without its porch but with the rear Smoking Room projection, and the gents outside urinal attached to its east wall.

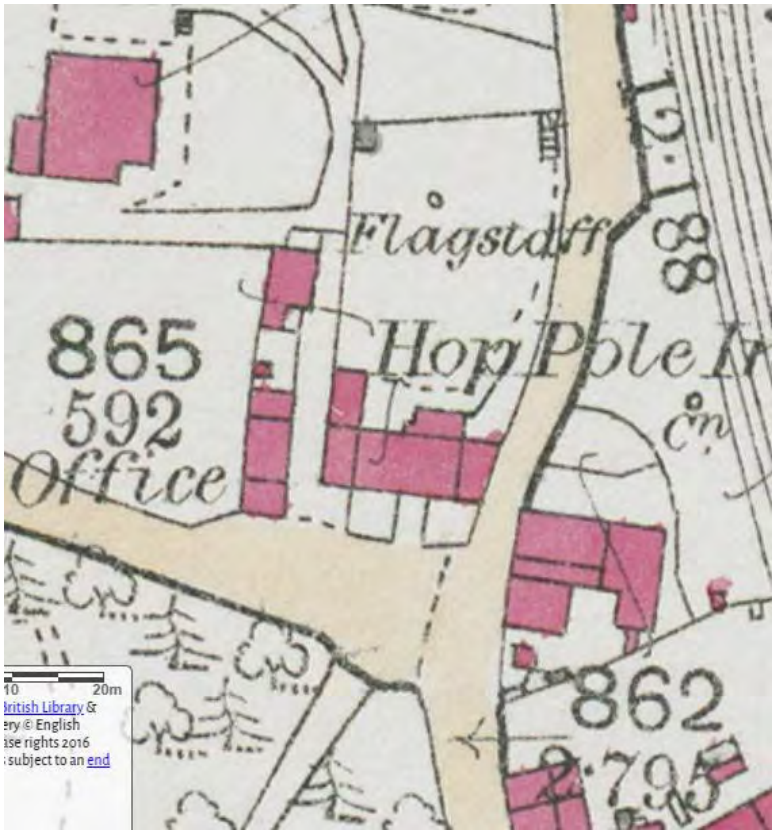

Fig. 13 : Ordnance Survey, 1844-1888 OS 25" 1st Edition [1:2500 scale] – drawn c. 1886-8

Note the presence of the rear kitchen wing [west], smoking room [east] built by 1886, and the small lean-to porch against the smoking room's west wall. The separately leased garden [tithe plot 1773, everything above the word Flagstaff] formerly north of plot 1772, has been incorporated into the Hop Pole's garden. As a result the structure on the tithe map at the north-west corner of apportionment 1772 [perhaps an outdoor privy] has been removed and a new privy coloured grey is shown on the 1886-8 map, in the north-west corner of the Hop Pole's enlarged garden. This in turn has been removed on the map of 1894-1903, by which time plumbed lavatories were installed in or nearer the pub.



Fig. 14 : Tithe Map, 1841, surveyor George C. Ashmead, Bristol. [Wiltshire History Centre; Tithe Apportionment, Bradford on Avon, long map]

There is a rear west wing on the site of the present kitchen, but otherwise the rear of the building is flat. Beyond the kitchen wing against the west boundary wall is what appears to be a walled structure without roof; possibly a pig-sty or similar. Plot 1772 is described on the Apportionment as a house and garden occupied by John Sheppard, owned by Robert Cooper and Henry and John Fisher. Plot 1773 is a Garden occupied by John Tucker.



Fig. 15 : Andrews & Drury's map, 1772

The building is shown sitting west of the road junction, i.e. without its beer cellar lean-to closing the garden gap to the east of the main building. It seems that this map is not a simple copy of Thomas Thorpe's 1742 map below, since the building west of the Hop Pole shown in 1742 is no longer extant. If this map is accurate, the beer cellar must post-date 1772. Note also the springs a lines of brooks draining to the river. One of the springs drains though the rear garden. This may explain the high level of moisture in the west gable wall, large diameter clay drainage gully (not running) and carved stone water spout and trough on Lower Stoke, also no longer running. The presence of springs in Limpley Stoke was one reason for its early settlement.



Fig. 16 : Thomas Thorpe, Map of Five Miles Round Bath, 1742

This is the earliest known map depicting the Hop Pole. The Hop Pole is shown in the centre below and right of the uppercase M. At this time the east gable wall was some way west of the road junction, showing that access from the front to the garden was available and the present lean-to beer cellar must post-date this map. No rear extending wings existed. The large garden plot to the north of the house shown on 19th century maps does not exist. The Hop Pole is shown incorporated into the curtilage of a large building to the west, near the curve of Woods Hill; that building had disappeared by the time Andrews & Drury's map was published in 1772.

4.4 STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS

4.4.1 Phasing and Evolution

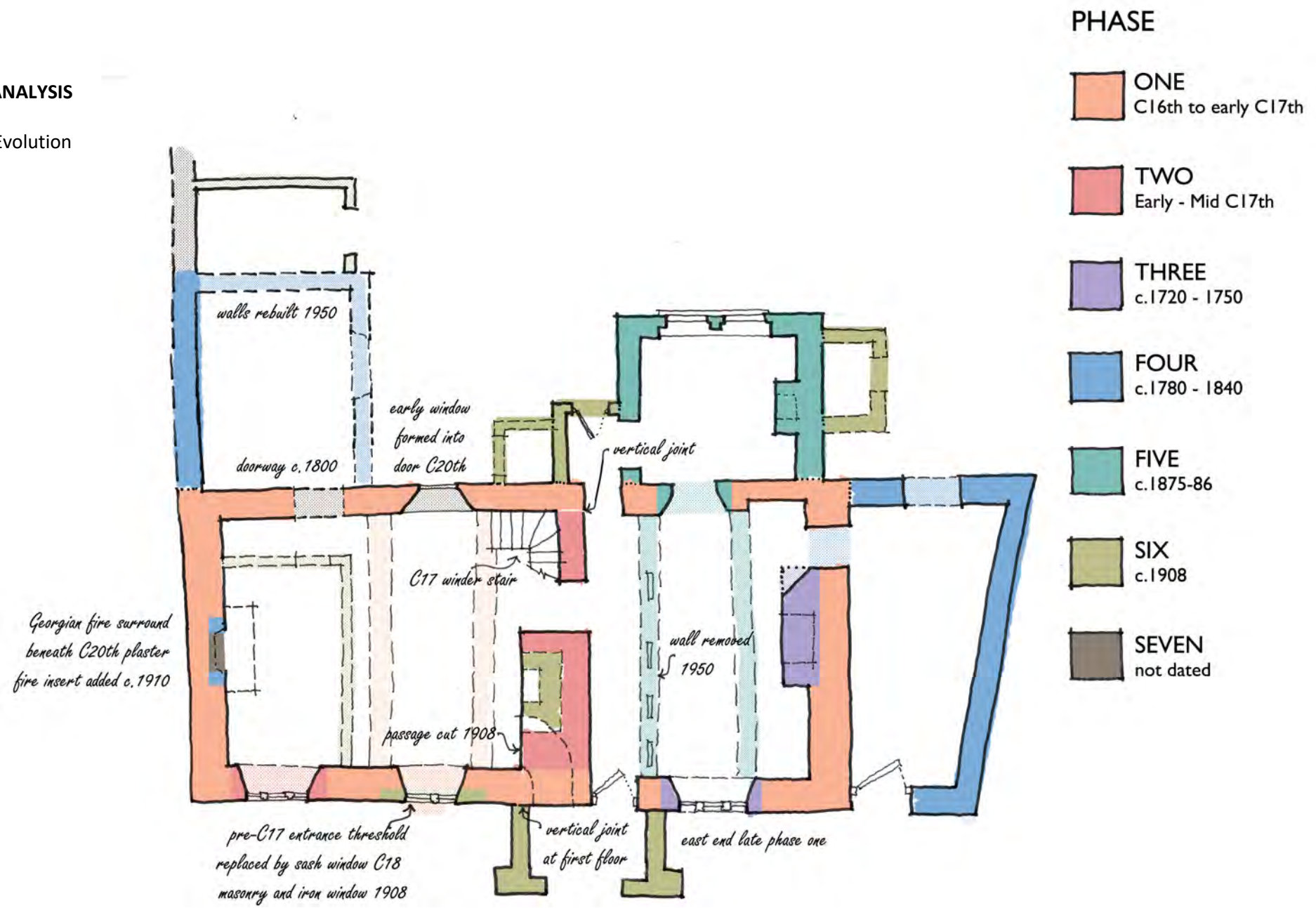

Fig. 17 : Ground floor phasing plan
Phasing update Nov 2023 to reflect discovery from phase one works

INTERNAL REARRANGEMENTS POST 1908 HAVE BEEN OMITTED FOR CLARITY

Phase 1 : Earliest – possibly late 16th/early 17th century

Initial repair works in 2023 has indicated that the body of the walls are built of stone set in earth mortar. This is common to all four external walls. The west end room may be the earliest phase as indicated by the masonry joins on the outside upper floor above the west side of the porch, and the vertical join inside the back door. The east end must either be contemporary or added soon after. It is however likely that the plan was of a large hall, stone walls with timber framed, thatched roof over.

The central chimneypiece was inserted later likely late 16th century and altered with an additional flue serving first floor when this was added, possibly early 17th century. This was evident in the construction of the chimney exposed when the roof was removed. The flue serving the first floor clearly built up against the earlier and much larger chimney.



Fig. 48 : Early masonry bedded in earth mortar



Fig. 49 : East gable, early masonry with steep roof pitch. Later lime mortar bedded masonry raised the eaves as part of 1880s roof renewal

The date of phase 1 is uncertain. If it was built as two storeys it is probably mid-16th century. It is likely that the ceiling was inserted, as was common c. 1550-1600, meaning the walls could be earlier and represent a hall house open to the rafters. While the roof structure was replaced in the late 19th century surviving roof elements including principle rafter, collar, purlin and brace, embedded in the chimney at first floor appear partially soot blackened where trapped by the later chimney construction. In addition the Tudor chimney retained the stone that carried the original ridge, approx 300mm below the later roof ridge and orientated 45 degrees from square.



Fig. 50 : Photo of first floor flue built up against the earlier chimney. Ridge pocket visible. Stone cover moulding indicating roof line and pitch



Fig. 51 : Photo of embedded roof timbers; purlins and strut

The structure in phase 1 was most likely a two room plan, but a one-room plan is possible. A buried threshold found in 2023 supports the suggestion that the entrance door was probably in the location of the window directly west of the porch, since a sash window was inserted here in the 18th century during a phase of adaption. The sash window existed in a photograph c. 1890 but was replaced by a 17th century style mullioned window probably in 1908.
The two ceiling beams in the Lounge Bar west of the porch are of an early phase. They are rough-hewn Elm and the only dateable feature is the stepped chamfer stops visible on both ends of both beams. These are a variation of the chamfer stop where the chamfer does not finish but is merely reduced in size and carries on into the wall. This occurs more commonly on chimneypieces and doorframes.



Fig. 52 : Stone cill of early entrance



Fig. 53 : Image approx 1882 of sash window in place of earlier entrance prior to replacement of masonry, addition of hood mould and label stops and iron casements

In general the simple square-cut stepped chamfer-stop is a common form in the 16th century in South Gloucestershire, Surrey and elsewhere. The form continues into the early part of the C17 before more elaborate chamfer stops such as scroll, cyma or lamb's tongue take over. This allows for a possible date for the ceiling structure at the west end c. 1550-1625, but with the possibility that the walls are earlier and the ceiling was inserted at this date range.

One comparable example of this 'half-stop' on a beam has been found at Kelmscott Manor, Oxfordshire, in the ground floor room known as the Green Room [fig. 20]. The stops occur at both ends of the beam. The room is believed to be part of the original structure built by the Turner family. A date c. 1570 was traditionally assigned, but recent thinking is that c. 1600-10 is more likely.[8] In either case, the date falls comfortably within the range we had already suggested here for the Hop Pole beams, c. 1550-1625.



Fig. 18. lounge bar, south wall, west beam; chamfer stop behind the iron nail.



Fig. 19 : rear hall, east beam at foot of stairs; flat stepped chamfer stops



Fig. 20 : comparative image; Kelmscott Manor, chamfer stop dated c.1570-1610 in the Green Room

[7] Moir and Parker; Hall, Rural Houses of North Avon, p.53. Pers. Comm. Linda Hall, 8/4/22.

[8] Nicholas Cooper, Kelmscott Manor, in *William Morris's Kelmscott; Landscape and History*, 2007, pp. 112-114.

Phase 2 : Early-mid 17th century

The vertical masonry join noted in phase 1 inside the rear door is indication of some previous structure having been demolished, for such a join would not otherwise be created at the external corner of a building.



Fig. 21 : Vertical masonry join inside back door, showing the massive blocks of phase I [r.], and the smaller rough rubble of phase 2.

The plan appears to have been adjusted at an early phase, possibly within phase one. A new full gable wall was inserted, which carries a large masonry chimney breast. Part of the chimney opening survives with later alteration and loss of its south end due to the insertion of an entrance around 1908. The chimney opening has a shallow depressed four-centred arch, of the type usually called a Tudor arch. This is typical of West Country chimneypieces of the middle third of the 17th century. The space within the chimney is large with a wrought iron smoking bar present at approx 8ft. up and to the right, at the side of the fire itself. As noted above, the dating overlap for beams and chimneypiece allows for the possibility that the ceiling was inserted in phase 2.



Fig. 22 : lounge bar chimney opening, with mid-17th century chamfered and depressed arch above the concrete lintel and row of bricks.

The chimney opening was cut through in 1908, removing the south [right hand] end of the opening. This was to create a curved entrance passage giving a direct entrance to the lounge bar from outside.



Fig. 23 : Understair cupboard in lounge bar: sloped masonry to right hand wall indicates probably position of former winder stair.

The main staircase was replaced by a Victorian/ Edwardian one, presumably either c. 1880 or in 1908. In the understair cupboard off the lounge bar is a sloped ledge which seems to curve upwards along the 17th century wall containing the chimneypiece above. This probably indicates the former presence of a steep winder stair in this corner, which would have risen in the space between the corner and the projecting chimney breast. This is a typical plan form for houses of the mid-17th century in North Avon and South Gloucestershire.[9]

[9] Hall, Rural Houses of North Avon… p.18

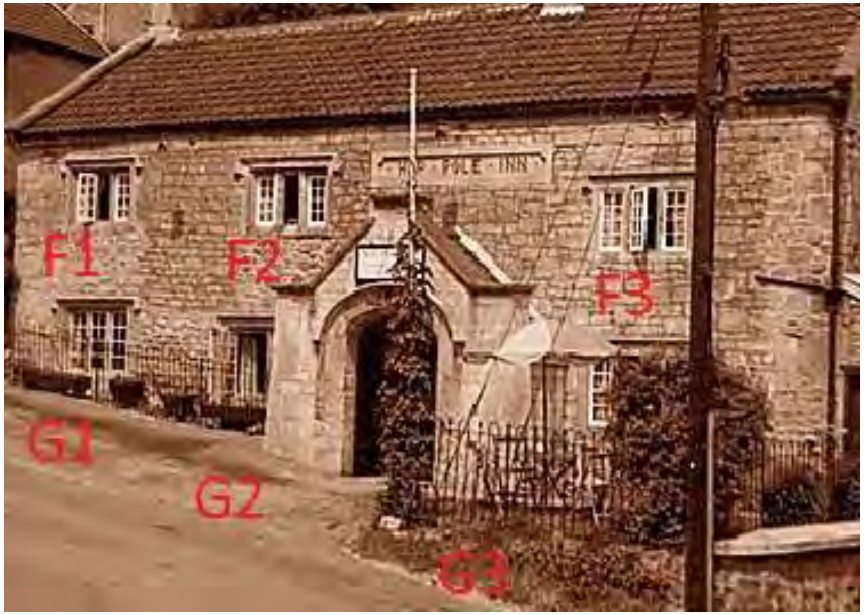

Fig. 24 : Labelled photograph to identify windows for dating

G1 – Ground floor first from west: ovolo mullions, mid 17th century, head and dripmould renewed

G2 – Ground floor, second from west: ovolo mullioned of narrower profile than G1. Replaced a sash window photographed c.1890, therefore the entire window is probably of 1908. Window masonry post dated buried threshold stone. G2 location of early / original entrance.

G3 – Ground floor, east: flat mullions with a fat roll-mould to edge of frame. Typical of c. 1720-50. Hoodmould possibly added 1908.

F1 – First floor first from west: mid 17th century ovolo mullions, possibly part renewed.

F2 – first floor second from west: mid 17th century ovolo mullions, possibly part renewed. West casement has some very rippled crown glass, probably pre-1850.

F3 – first floor, east: flat mullions with a fat roll-mould to edge of frame. Typical of c. 1720-50. Hoodmould possibly added 1908. 7 panes have old bullseye glass.

Masonry joins to the walls west of the porch indicate that the 17th century windows here have replaced earlier openings, though precise analysis has not yet been agreed. Close inspection of the masonry during the removal of the timber windows as part of the 2023 repair works confirmed the presence of holes for saddle bars which likely supported leaded lights before the timber windows. This supports the proposal that Phase 1 predates the mid-17th century.



Fig. 54 : front elevation November 2023, window repair and renewals in progress.

The first floor east room has in its west wall a part-revealed roof timber indicating the height and pitch of the 16th / 17thcentury thatched roof. This rafter is trapped within the Phase 2 wall above the lounge bar fireplace, built in the 17th century. The date of the timber is not clear. Options include:

1. The original roof extended across the full plan. The straight joint in the masonry indicating a change in construction but not phasing.
2. Phase 2 : part of the mid 17th century construction. It would have been originally part of the gable end wall. In this case the tenon shown in fig. 26, for a purlin running east, must have been cut when phase 3 was added; but old oak hardens and cutting new tenons would thus have been difficult and bringing into question the sequence of elements to the east..
3. Phase 3 : a new main rafter was inserted to take the join between new and old roofs in the 18th century, with tenons for the new purlins.

The phasing in unclear, however the rafter was overbuilt with new masonry when the roof was raised in the late 19th century, likely to create a cross wall at the centre of the raised front wall for additional stability.





Fig. 25 [l.] : embedded roof rafter in upper floor east end room.

Fig 26 [r.] : detail of purlin tenoned into the rafter, with the peg [circled] holding in half the remaining purlin end

Phase 3 : c. 1720 – 1750

A room was added to the east end, with a new front door and through corridor to a new rear door, enlarging the layout to a three-room structure. Dating of this phase is chiefly through the style of the chimney opening in the east room, later the main bar, and the mullioned front windows upstairs and down, which are of matching squared or rectangular-section mullions with a fat edge roll. In Somerset and Wiltshire the ovolo mullions seen in Phase 2 finally went out of fashion c. 1700-20.



Fig. 27 : Upper east end front window, with rectangular section mullions and a fat edge roll, typical of the early to mid 18th century

The 17th century style dripmould above may have been added in phase 6 when the appearance; of the fenestration to this facade was unified.

The east bar has two lateral ceiling beams without stops or other dateable features and very roughly cut so the dimensions of the chamfering varies, or even disappears in places. These are not in their original positions with the whole east cell floor appearing to have been poorly reassembled at a lower level.

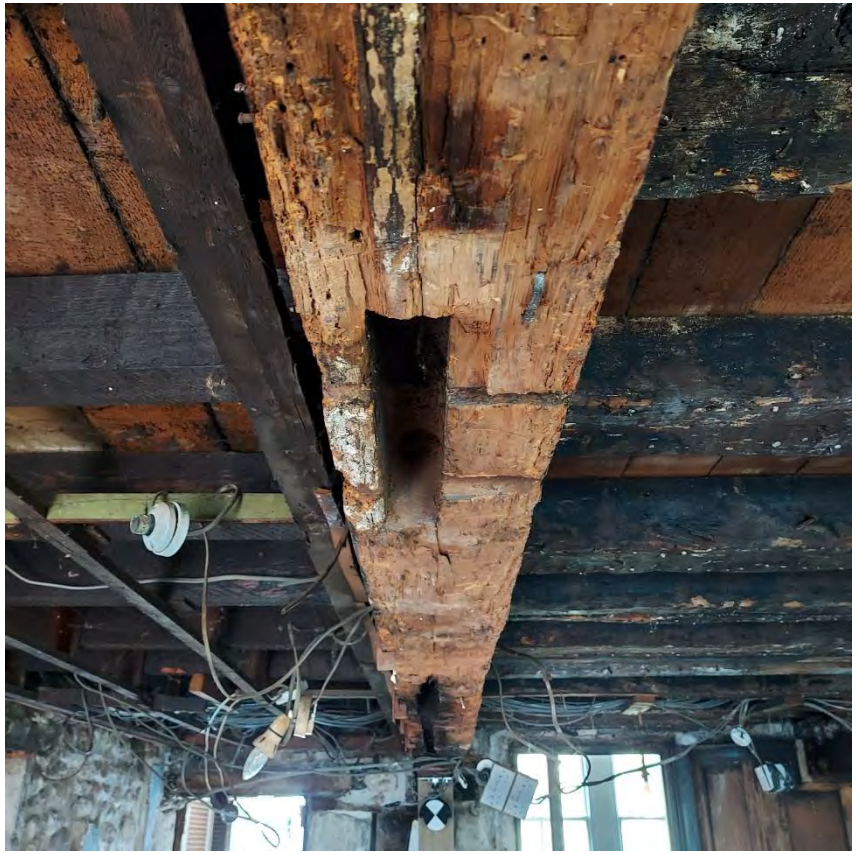



Fig. 28 [l.] : West beam in bar, showing tenons for a plank screen wall forming a corridor on its left. Wall removed 1950.

Fig. 29 [r.] : East beam in bar showing the rough adze-hewn finish without dateable features such as chamfer stops.

The ceiling above these beams appears likely to be coeval with the beams; elements are severely decayed. The original floor boards largely survive although covered by later boards, probably late 19th century. The west beam is severely decayed through woodworm and rot at its north end and is barely attached to the rear wall.

The fire opening in the east room is rectangular, the top has no cambered arch as in the phase 2 lounge bar fireplace. There is a small chamfer to the edge of the opening and the corners are rounded. This is typical of fire openings in this area of the early to mid 18th century. The corner of the chimneybreast was cut back at an angle to ease the access to the beer cellar door, either when the lean-to was added in phase 4, or later in the 19th century.





Fig. 30 [l.] : Bar chimneybreast, showing rectangular opening with narrow chamfer and rounded corners.

Fig. 31 [r.] : Comparison, chimneypiece No. 1 Queen Square, Bath, rear range c. 1740-50, with similar features [C19 iron insert].

Phase 4 c. 1780 - 1840

The single storey lean-to at the east end of the building, now the beer cellar, was not extant on two maps of 1742 and 1772 – in both there is clearly a gap with a strip of garden ground between the east end of the building and the corner of Lower Stoke. By the tithe map of 1841 the lean-to has been built, allowing a date c. 1780-1840 for phase 4. The rear single-storey wing extending into the garden on the west side of the property, now the kitchen, also appears during this date range; they have been grouped together although it is not possible to say whether the two alterations happened at exactly the same time.

The kitchen has been substantially altered more than once, probably in phases 5 and 6 and certainly again in 1950. Probably only the back wall against the property boundary is original.

Works in 2023 established that the roof was likely of phase 5 with the floor and walls built beneath in the 1970s. This work lowered the original floor [likely stone flags on earth] by about 200mm allowing a concrete slab to be poured. These changes align with the proposals for a new kitchen at the time.

The beer cellar has no readily dateable features, being essentially utilitarian. Beneath the roof line against the gable end wall of the main building, is a sloped set-off or weathering which may show the line of an earlier lower lean-to, or may have been original to phase 3. Its purpose is unclear.





Fig. 32 [l.] interior lean-to beer cellar, c. 1780 -1840. The passage beyond was created in 1950.
Fig. 33 [r.] : Sloped set off beneath the roof slope on the east gable wall.

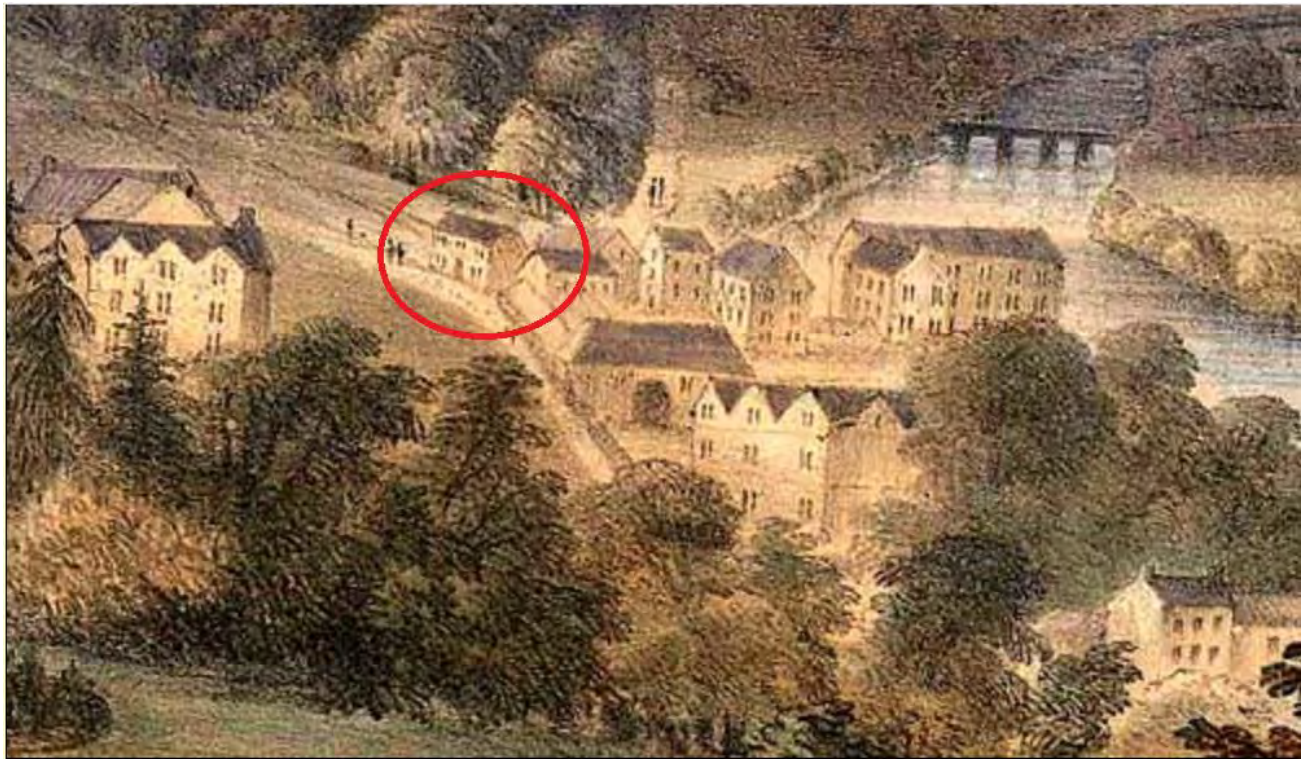

Fig. 34 : Elizabeth Tackle, Limpley Stoke c. 1850 showing the Hop Pole circled.

A local artist, Elizabeth Tackle, depicted Limpley Stoke c.1850. Although the Hop Pole is a distant element and the image cannot be taken as accurate in its details, it does show a façade with three windows across the upper floor and a roughly central doorway. The beer cellar at the east end is not shown.

Phase 5 - c. 1875 - 1886:

A range of alterations were carried out between these dates, probably by W.H. Weston [landlord 1879-83] and then by James Male, landlord until 1909. They have been grouped together for convenience.

The Smoking Room, sometimes called the private room or bar-parlour, was added to the rear of the main bar before October 1880, the date provided by a news report that two quarrymen were charged with being drunk and refusing to quit the pub.[10] The trial report provides evidence that the pub contained a bar or taproom [the east end room] and a 'bar-parlour', which gives a latest date for the Smoking Room added onto the rear of the taproom [main bar]. The terms Smoking Room and bar-parlour seem to be interchangeable for this room in various documents. It appears on the OS map of 1886-8, see fig. 13. A report[11] of the theft of a crowbar in November 1886 mentions that the inn had a taproom and a private room, the seemingly meaning the Smoking Room above.

The only photograph found of the pub at this phase is a distant view of the rear from the River Avon, showing that it was thatched. The photo is undated must be post 1857, date of the railway and post 1863 the date of the Hotel [operating as a Hydropathic Establishment] but prior to 1880 when the building was substantially renovated and the roof renewed. Diana George, whose parents ran the Hop Pole 1958-76 and who grew up there, remembers seeing a photograph of the pub with a full thatched roof; this has not been located.

[10] Wiltshire Times & Trowbridge Advertiser, October 30, 1880.
[11] Wiltshire Times, Nov. 27, 1886.



Fig. 35 : Hop Pole inn [circled] with thatched roof, possibly 1880s.

In c.1886 James Male spent c.£300-400 on improving the accommodation for the public.

In September 1890 local newspapers reported the hearing of a licence application from the landlord of the Rose & Crown, Limpley Stoke, to build a small hotel next to the pub.[12] This was opposed by James Male at the Hop Pole and his evidence gives valuable detail on the pub's facilities. These include:

- He had been landlord for about 7 years.
- He had spent £300-400 to improve the public accommodation at the Hop Pole, three to four years before.

[12] Trowbridge Chronicle, September 27, 1890.

- The pub had a taproom and a large dining room capable of seating 40 people [probably the present lounge bar and west room beyond without any dividing wall].
- There were three bedrooms of which the smallest, about 8x12 feet, was a spare room. His daughter and her family had shared the upstairs living accommodation for about 1 year.
- He had only once been requested to provide accommodation for a customer.
- There was no stabling as the pub did not need it.

The phase 5 alterations are likely to have been as follows:

- Smoking parlour added in garden to rear of east bar
- A lean-to porch to protect an external entrance to the Smoking Room [see fig. 13, OS map redrawn 1886-8] giving independent access to this room from the rear garden.
- Thatched roof on C17 timbers completely removed, gable walls and eaves masonry raised to accommodate new shallower tiled roof
- Modernisation of first floor to improve the three bedrooms; apart from the central chimneybreast over the lounge bar, all partition walls, doors and floorboards appear to have been renewed. The late Victorian fire surround in the main bedroom is probably of this phase. The ceilings must have been entirely of this phase given the raising and replacement of the roof structure.
- Replacement of 17th century winder staircase with a conventional late C19 timber one.

The replacement of the roof involved raising the rear wall height considerably, and at both end gables, to give a shallower roof pitch and more ceiling height in the upstairs rooms. The outside wall on the rear landing has a shelf running most of its length where the thickness of the earlier walls was reduced in order to minimise the additional load on the lower walls.





Fig. 36 [l.] : Rear upper rooms looking east; low pre-19th century window and corresponding shelf on landing where walls were raised for new roof.

Fig. 37 [r.] : Roof space looking west showing softwood roof timbers of c. 1886.



Fig. 38 : Hop Pole Inn c. 1890 – with tiled roof but no porch, no separate door to lounge bar, sash window [r.] to lounge bar.

Phase 6 - 1908 additions:

In February 1908 the Annual Wiltshire Licensing Sessions were reported on: "The whole of the licenses would be renewed with the exception of the following: […] The Hop Pole, Limpley Stoke, where structural alterations were proceeding. These would be adjourned until March 11." [13] No further reference was found to these alterations, however they seem to have included the following:

- The large west room, previously the landlord's private kitchen, was converted to a lounge bar, with independent access by a curved passage and new entrance doorway cut through stonework of 17th century chimneybreast
- A glazed timber screen with door was inserted in the lounge bar to separate it from the private hallway behind. The lounge bar had no counter for serving drink; customers would have gone through to the public bar, or possibly rung a bell.
- New porch to unify two front doors.
- Lounge bar sash window replaced by 17th century style mullioned one.
- Wall inserted in former large west room to create a smaller private living room at the west end. The larder to its north must be of the same date. The date of these changes is uncertain so it is shown in black on the phase plan; however it forms a logical group dependent upon the change of use of the private kitchen to a lounge bar.
- Facade unified by addition of 17th century style hoodmoulds where not extant
- Pub name carved in stone above porch
- Lobby door added inside through corridor. A vertical timber embedded in the wall of the east room shows its location.
- Men's outside urinal added to east wall of smoking parlour; ladies WC added against the rear porch. Former privy at north end of garden removed.
- New bar counter to east bar, and internal access to Smoking Room converted from a doorway to a hatch.

[13] Wiltshire Times, February 15, 1908.

- The single storey west wing at the rear is likely to have been converted to use as a kitchen at this time, to compensate for the conversion of the former private kitchen to a lounge bar. A door was created from the rear hallway with steps up into the kitchen.
- The rear half of the through corridor hall is a public area giving access to the rear yard, lavatories and parlour. In October 1934 alteration plans were put to the Wiltshire Housing Committee; they were not satisfactory.[14]



Fig. 39 : Plan as existing c. 1908 – 1950 [WHC, G2/770/29].

[14] Wiltshire Times, Oct 27 1934

Phase 7 - 1950

Simonds Brewery made significant changes in 1949-50, as per the plans below at Wiltshire History Centre.

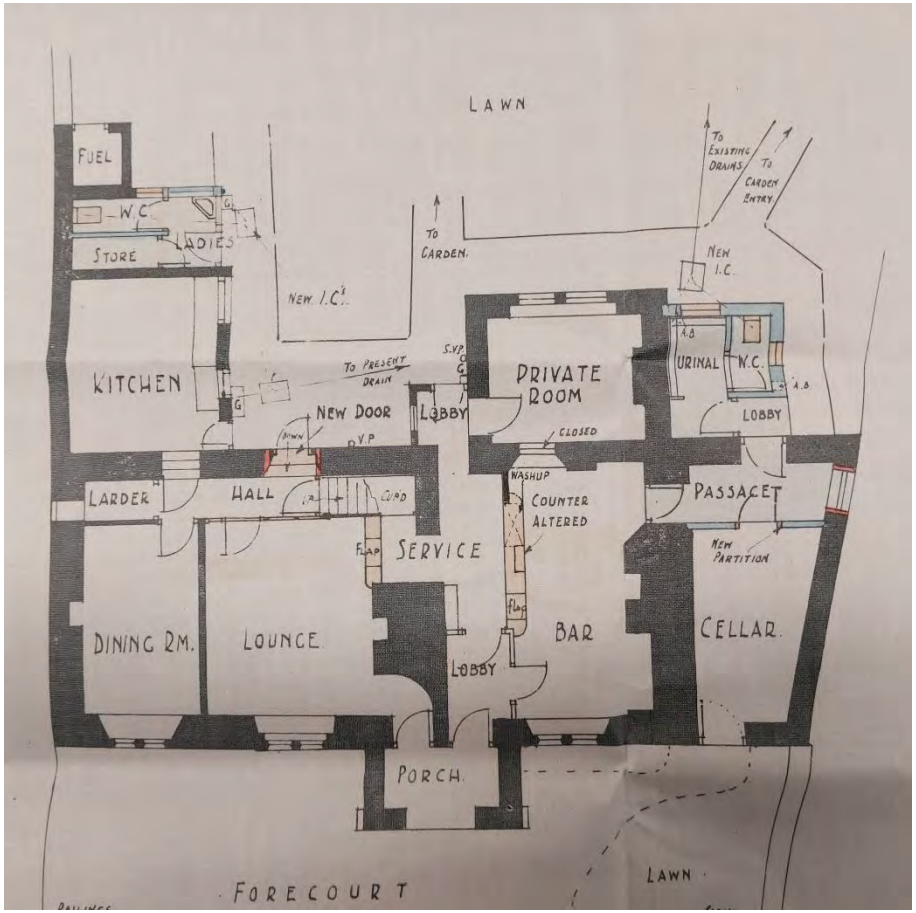

Fig. 40 : Changes made 1950, planning appl. 538, Dec 28, 1949 [WHC, G2/770/29]

a. New flat-roofed men's WCs added at north-east rear corner. Extant.

b. New ladies lavatories formed from store room north of kitchen. Old lean-to lavatory by rear porch removed.
c. Passage formed at north end of lean-to beer cellar to access men's WCs direct from bar.
d. East wall of through hallway removed, main bar counter [east room] repositioned. Former hatch to smoking room closed.
e. Window cut down to form new door from private rear hall to outside courtyard – access from lounge bar to ladies lavatories.
f. Glazed timber screen north of lounge bar moved north to form larger bar and smaller hallway behind. Door to rear hall repositioned.
g. Door added at foot of family staircase for privacy.
h. The front walls of the kitchen appear to have been much rebuilt either at this phase, or possibly in the 1970s.
i. The bar fire openings are likely to have been reduced to improve heat efficiency at this time.

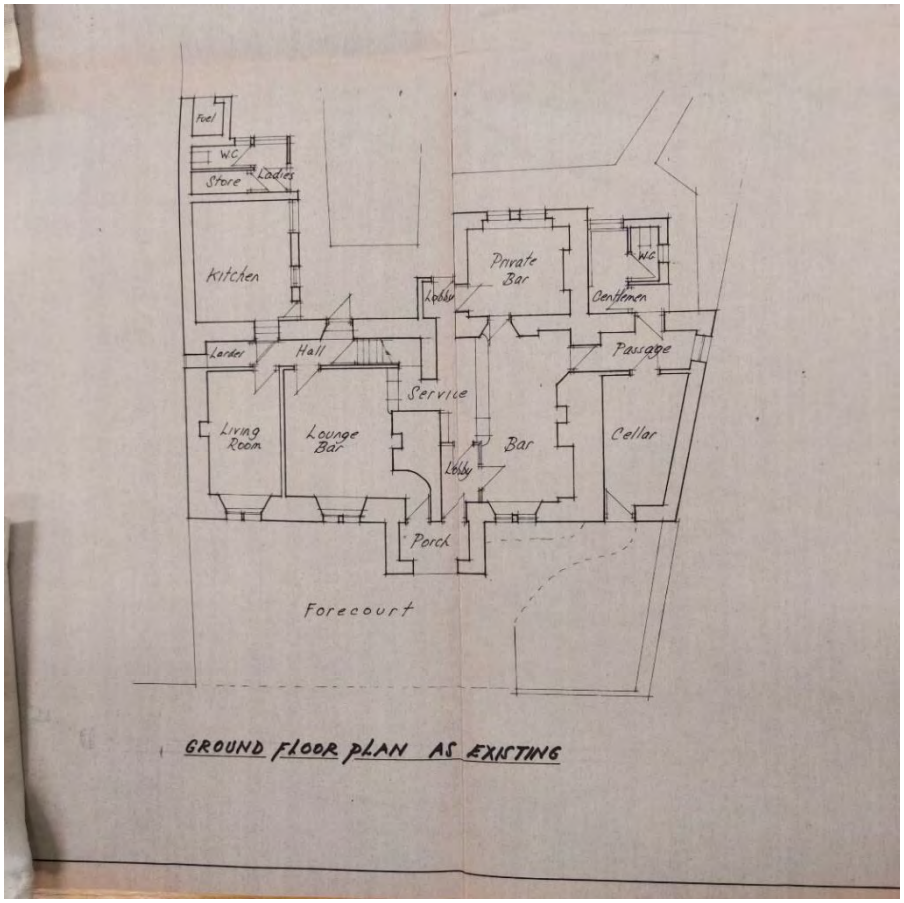

Fig. 41 : Ground floor as existed c.1950 – 1977 [WHC, B11/295/1/58]

a. West room served as private living room for landlords family. They also used the rear kitchen for both pub and private catering.

b. A doorway existed between the bar and private bar at the rear.

c. The counter in the lounge bar was a narrow hatch type that attached to the corner of the large chimneypiece.

Phase 8 – 1970s

Courage Brewery applied for planning permission in 1973 to create a large new toilet block in the rear courtyard. Permission seems to have been granted but the extension was not built. The works of 2023 have however revealed that the kitchen block was largely re-built beneath the earlier Victorian / Phase 5 roof.



Fig. 42 : Unexecuted plan for new toilet block in rear courtyard, Sept. 1973 [WHC, B11/295/1/58]

In 1977 under new management, Courage applied for a less ambitious updating of the interiors. This was carried out, leaving the layout which lasted until closure and partial gutting in 2018-21.

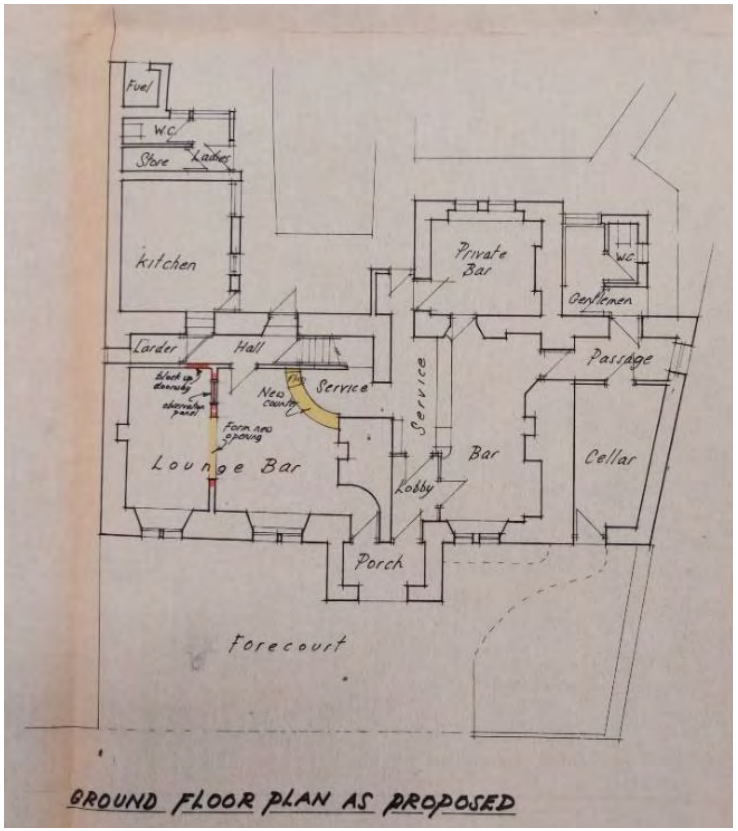

Fig. 43 : Plan after alterations May 1977 [Wilts. History Centre, B11/295/1/58]

a. Angled bar counter in Lounge Bar replaced a straight hatch-style counter
b. Arch cut through wall to bring former private sitting room into Lounge Bar. Rows of drill holes are visible where the arch was formed. The door to the private quarters in the north wall was blocked.

c. Small observation panel cut in wall to give visibility between the bar counter into the hidden part of the west end room.

d. As the only private living room had become part of the lounge bar, the upstairs was converted to a landlord's flat by adding a kitchen area to the back of the east bedroom, and using that room as a living space. The landing was altered to allow independent access to one of the bedrooms. A flimsy built-in wardrobe fitting in the middle bedroom is probably of this phase. The front west bedroom is still only accessible through another bedroom. No plans are known for this work.[15]

[15] Pers. comm., Diana George.

5.0 HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

5.1 Historic and Cultural Significance

- The Hop Pole has been at the heart of Limpley Stoke's communal identity for at least 200 years and very likely 100 or 200 yeas before this too. It illustrates the centrality of the pub to 19th and 20th century British culture, and to this community in particular.
- It has been in the same use since at least 1841, and its recent closure as a pub caused widespread dismay in the community. This was manifested in the determination of the community to retain its pub and by the campaign of 2021-2 which raised more than £500,000 by subscribers prepared to translate their affection for the pub as an institution into action to ensure it reopens as a hub of the community: the story is ongoing.
- It has been associated with the Limpley Stoke Brewery which itself began in the 18th century and only ceased with the rise of big commercial brewery factories in the early 20th century. The Hop Pole is representative of the local village pub in general, but in particular of a type [similar to a tied house] which was owned by and associated with one local brewery for decades or even centuries. The Hop Pole seems likely to have been the main village pub since the 18th century at least, and was until the late 19th century owned by the Limpley Stoke Brewery, which operated from buildings on Lower Stoke just metres from the pub. The brewery was owned by the Fisher family before 1738. Later they were allied through marriage with the Coopers; the pub was owned in 1841 by Fishers and Coopers. The Brewery finally passed to the ownership of the Bath Brewery Company only in 1889. A succession of takeovers by larger and more distant companies ended with the pub owned by Courage's Brewery from 1960 and finally the Wellington Pub Company from the 1990s.
- James Male [1835-1926], who served as landlord of the Hop Pole c.1883-1909, was locally celebrated for his dramatic and colourful life story: he served in merchant shipping from the age of eight, escaped the Revolution of 1848 in France, enlisted in the Royal Navy in 1854, was shipwrecked in the Baltic, taken prisoner and survived an enforced march of 3000 miles from Riga to Moscow and then to St Petersburg. As a Crimean War veteran he had been among the group of young sailors who volunteered to spike the Russian guns at Sebastopol, a feat of heroism commemorated in the song 'The Midshipmite' by the Bristol songwriter Fred Weatherly. Male's funeral at Limpley Stoke was featured in many newspapers.

- The immediate locale was the setting for the Ealing Comedy, *The Titfield Thunderbolt*, 1953. By an odd coincidence, the plot centred on a small community taking on the running of a railway service intended for closure.
- The Hop Pole also featured in the Kazuo Ishiguro / Merchant Ivory film, *The Remains of the Day*, 1993; Stevens the butler, played by Anthony Hopkins, was shown drinking in the bar, walking upstairs and into the middle bedroom where he stayed the night.

5.2 Archaeological Significance

- The west end of the building appears to date from some time before the mid-17th century; the earliest dateable features are two beams possibly c. 1550-1625. This date is significant because it falls within the Great Rebuilding, a national wave of construction based on Britain's newly-won prosperity and relative political stability in the Tudor and Stuart era. In particular the Hop Pole is evidence of the wave of prosperity based on woollen weaving which saw the growth of Limpley Stoke and similar communities in the steep, well-watered valleys between the Cotswolds, the Mendips and the Wiltshire Downs, all areas famed for sheep farming.

- The pub bears traces of at least eight major phases of development from 1550 to the 1970s. It has the potential to yield further evidence through deeper investigation and through testing with recent and future technologies. The possibility that parts of a medieval building are buried at the core of the present structure cannot but be verified, but neither can it be disproved.

- Although no single phase from the pre-20th century is especially complete, the effect of a palimpsest where each phase has left its mark and in cases partly unpicked or overlaid earlier work is evidence of a building that has evolved continually in responses to the changing needs of its occupiers.

- The phases are fairly well supported by archival and documentary evidence, again with the possibility that more may be discovered.

5.3 Architectural and Artistic Significance

- The craftsmanship of the masonry and carpentry demonstrates the typical mid-range of vernacular work in the West Country. The work is not of great rarity or aesthetic innovation, and decorative details are few, as would be expected of a building of this type and location.
- However the Bath stone building with tiled roof, originally thatched, has significant impact in this setting of a village scattered along the steep side of the Avon valley. The village has grown considerably with infill residential development since the 1930s, and traditional vernacular buildings thus make up a smaller percentage of the total built environment.
- The dateable features such as chimneypieces, window mullions and ceiling beams seem to be typical of types found in the Bristol, Bath and Wiltshire region. This has potential to yield further dating and aesthetic understanding based on future research, and to contribute to the understanding of local data.
- The location at a road junction was always seen as a centre of the village. Until the rise of the car and supermarket shopping, the railway station, village shop and post-office, the manor house, the Hydropathic Hotel, and the brewery and mill which were the mainstays of the 19th century economy, were all within 100 yards or so of the pub site. It was a landmark building for the village and has the potential to be so again.

5.4 Significance of main features

WALLS : the outside walls of the main block are c.16th century, to east end the cellar is 18th century. These walls are of HIGH significance for the story they tell of the building's evolution, and for their age. The south front has evidence of possible pre-17th century window openings in the upper floor. The threshold at G2 indicates the early / original entrance. A sill along the inside of the rear wall is evidence for a former lower roofline. Likewise masonry joins in the gable ends show how the roofs were raised, probably in the late 19th century. Beneath the staircase is a sloped masonry wall indicating the possible site of a former newel stair. The rear additions of the 19th and 20th century are of MEDIUM and LOW significance for the story they tell of the building's evolution. The Kitchen fabric has detrimental significance as modern additions that have removed historic fabric. The male WC holds detrimental significance due to its impact on the earlier phases.

The upstairs east room [formerly landlord's private kitchen] has an embedded oak roof truss possibly of the 17th or 18th century; this is of HIGH significance for its archaeological value.

INTERNAL WALLS : the dividing wall of Bath stone blocks in the west bar is of LOW significance. It was probably inserted c. 1908 when the old landlords kitchen was converted to a second bar. It was partly removed by creation of an arched opening c. 1977. The upstairs bedroom walls have not been fully examined. Solid masonry parts are likely to be of HIGH/ MEDIUM significance as part of the early phase evolution. Some areas of stud partition walls are likely to be of the undocumented work done c. 1977 to create a private flat. These and the attached wardrobe/airing cupboard fittings are of LOW significance. The bathroom walls are likely to be stud walled or similar construction, and are believed to be c. 1977, of LOW / DETRIMENTAL significance. The west larder is probably c.1908 and of LOW significance.

CHIMNEYPIECES : Ground floor – in the main bar and lounge bar are two stone-built chimneypieces of HIGH significance. That in the Lounge bar, although partly removed in 1908, has a 17th century arched opening. The main bar [east room] is probably early 18th century and helps to date this phase of additions. Both have detrimental 20th century alterations which should be removed if possible. In the west room is a brick-faced arched fire opening probably dating from 1908. It is of LOW significance. There may be evidence behind of a removed early chimneybreast.
First floor: the east room chimneypiece is a standard late 19th/early 20th century stone surround, with modern fire insert. The middle bedroom has a 1930s beige tiled and stepped chimneypiece. Both are of LOW significance. The latter is attached to a 17th century chimneybreast of HIGH significance, with the possibility of surviving evidence for an earlier fire opening behind the modern fireplace.

WINDOWS : HIGH significance. In the south front, a range of mullioned windows dating from the 17th to early 20th centuries. These are of HIGH significance for their aesthetic and architectural contribution, and as evidence of phasing.
The late 19th century sashes and 20th century windows in the rear elevation are of LOW significance.

FLOOR SURFACES : Ground floor: large areas appear to be of concrete or other 20th century finish – of LOW/DETRIMENTAL significance. Where earlier surfaces survive, such as the parquet blocks in the east bar, they may be of LOW significance, but are of some aesthetic value as survivors of the building remembered by villagers.

PANELLING : in the east bar, some oak finished panelling, probably early 20th century and of LOW significance archaeologically, but possibly of some value as part of the ambience of a traditional pub. In the lounge bar is a glazed and panelled softwood screen and door, seemingly of 1908, reconfigured and repositioned in 1950 and possibly again c.1977. Of LOW significance.

ROOF: MEDIUM significance. Seemingly entirely of c.1880s or later; evidence of phased evolution and updatings, but would not be a listable feature in itself. The roofs of the rear single-storey additions are of LOW significance, although more detailed inspection is required to verify whether any 18th/19th century fabric survives.

CHIMNEYSTACKS AND CHIMNEYPOTS : HIGH significance for their aesthetic contribution and conformity to traditional building forms. They were probably rebuilt when the roof was replaced in the late 19th century.

DOORS : LOW significance. Most doors appear to date from the 19th or 20th centuries. One or two plank doors e.g. in the beer cellar, west bedroom and rear outhouses, may be reassessed for date and significance in a more detailed examination. None appears initially to be pre-19th century.

BEAMS: HIGH significance. The two ceiling beams in the west room [lounge bar] have square cut half-stops which reduce the diameter of the chamfer but do not stop it. These may be dateable to c. 1550-1625 and are evidence either of a new build at that date, or possibly of an earlier [medieval] hall house ceiled over in the Great Rebuilding when chimneys would also have been inserted. The beams in the east room [main bar] may be 18th century. One has tenons for a plank screen wall east of the through corridor hall.

CEILINGS : Not fully evaluated, and not yet fully accessible behind later finishes and electrical fittings etc. What can be seen suggests that areas of the ceiling structure are formed directly by the floorboards of the upper rooms and are in places wide enough to suggest they may be 18th century or older, perhaps of oak or elm. In places [e.g. in front of the east room chimneypiece] the ceiling structure has been replaced perhaps in the 19th century. Some late 19th floorboards have been laid over an earlier floor upstairs. There are also several areas of severe decay. Potentially the ceilings/first floor structure are of HIGH significance for their age and potential archaeological interest.

STAIRCASE : LOW significance – a standard late 19th/ early 20th century staircase with turned newels and balusters, probably inserted c. 1908. Of some value as evidence of phased evolution.

BATHROOM /KITCHEN FITTINGS : both in the upstairs flat and in the catering kitchen, all visible surfaces and fittings are 20th century and of DETRIMENTAL significance.

LAVATORIES: Men's flat roofed WCs are 1950, of DETRIMENTAL significance. The women's WCs beyond the catering kitchen are structurally probably 19th century, of LOW significance. Fittings are modern and of DETRIMENTAL significance.

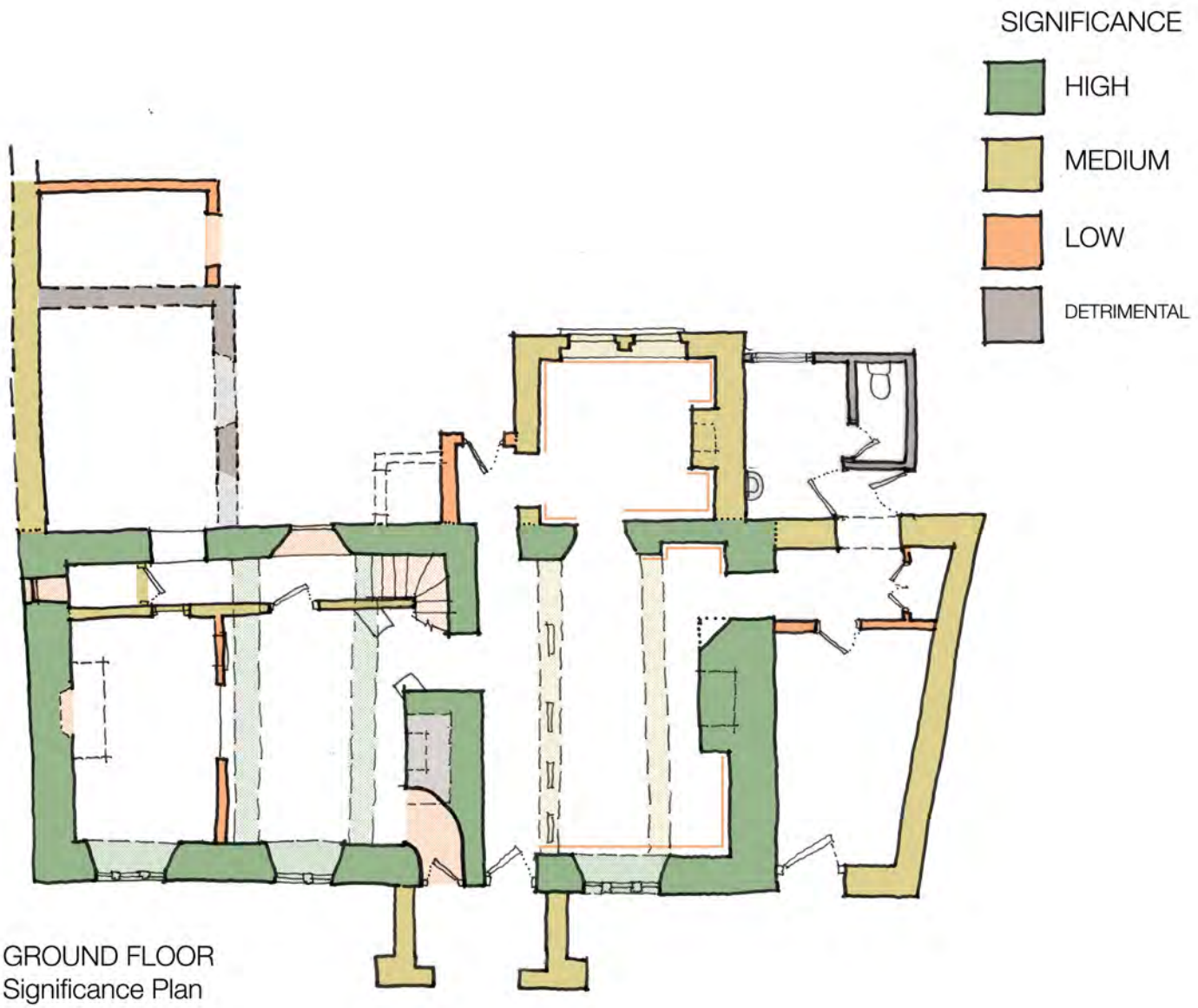

Fig. 44 : Significance Plan – Ground floor

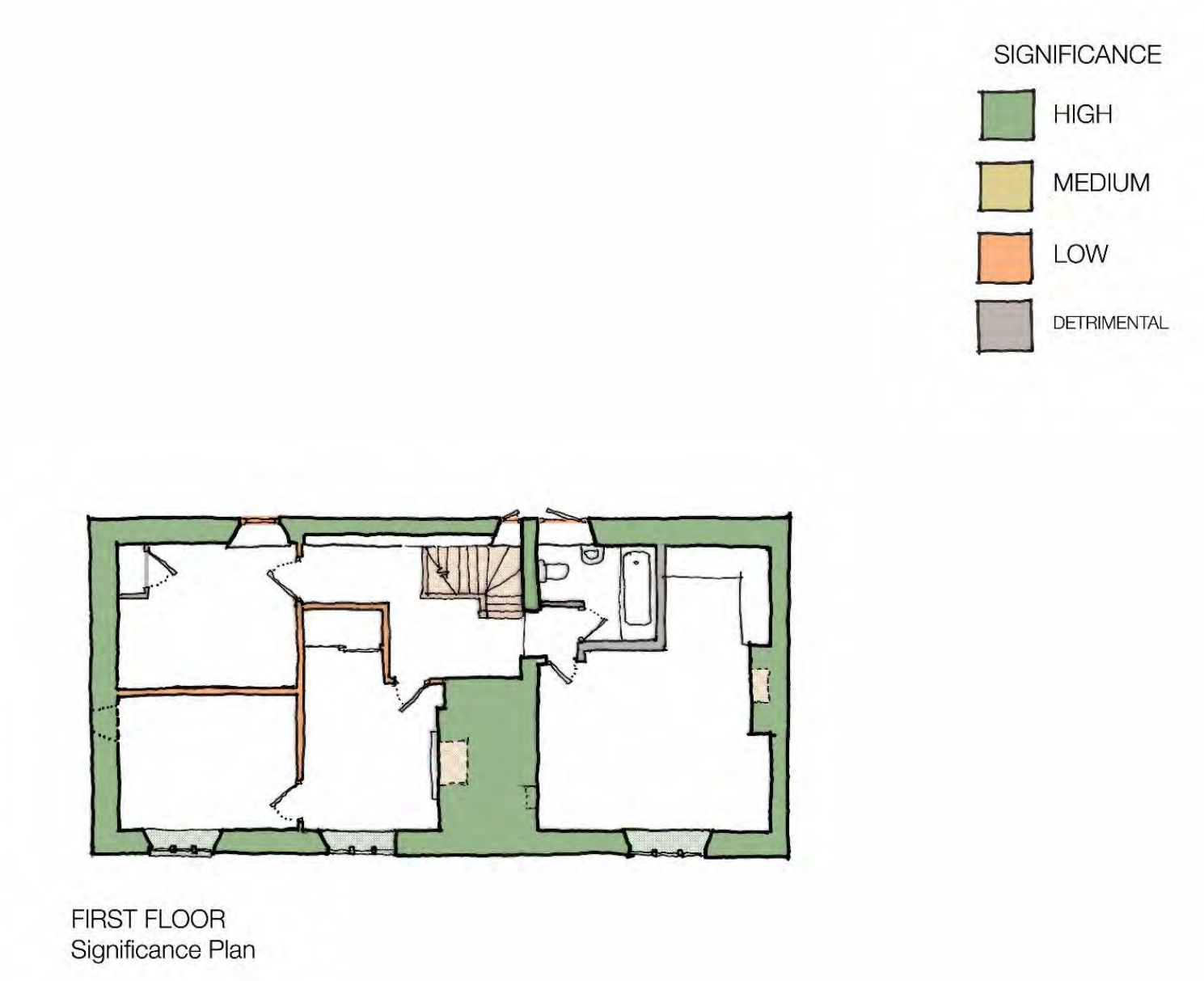

Fig. 45 : Significance Plan – First floor

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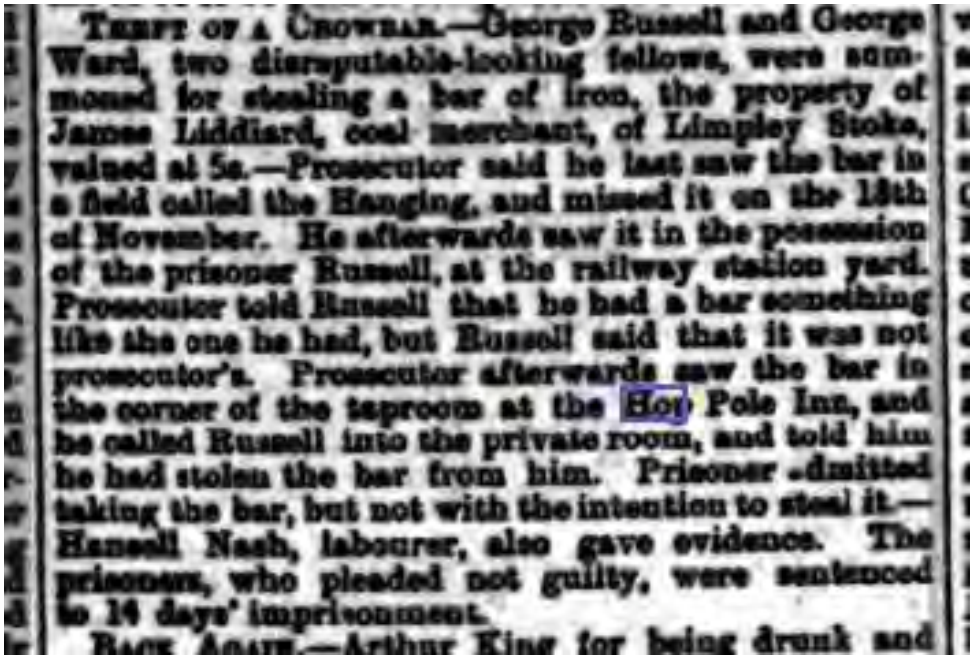
7.0 APPENDICES

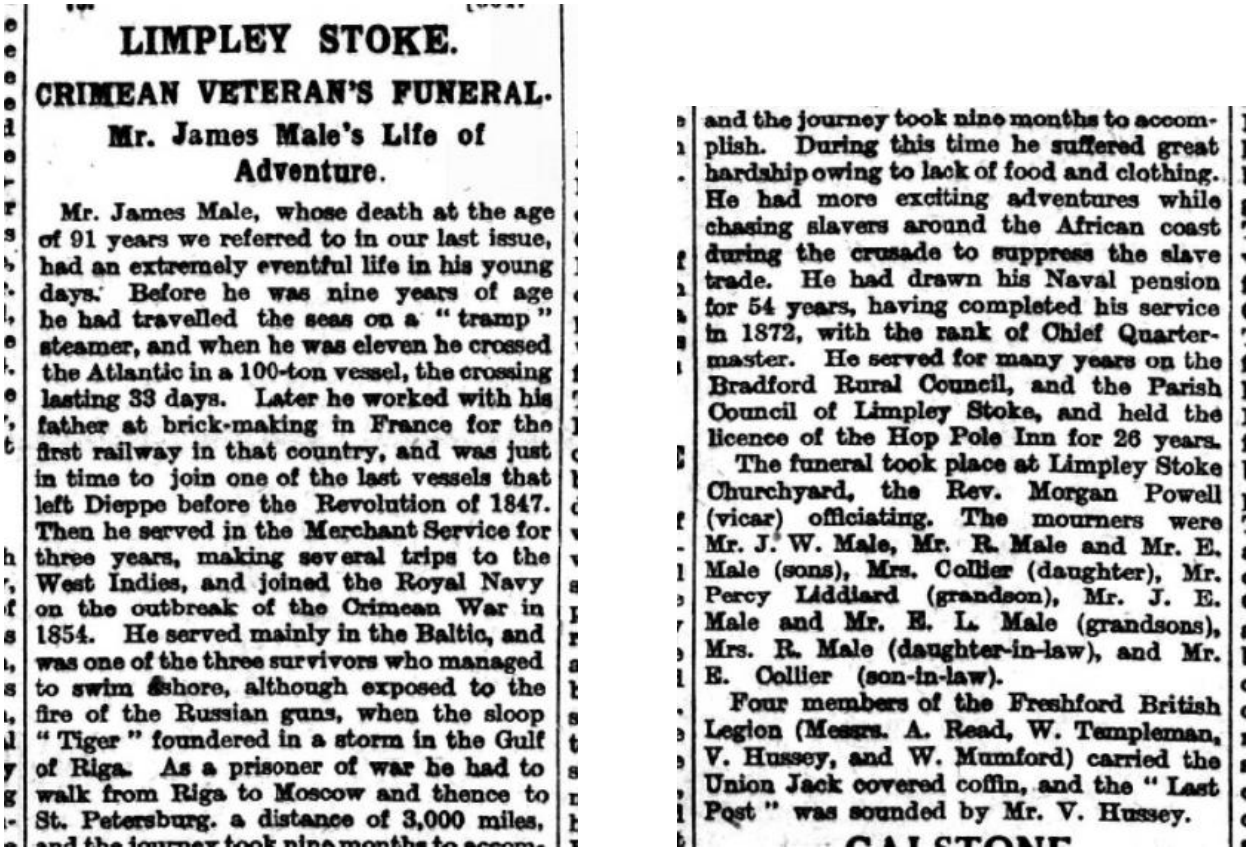
7.1 News cuttings



THEFT OF A CROWBAR.—George Russell and George Ward, two disreputable-looking fellows, were summoned for stealing a bar of iron, the property of James Liddiard, coal merchant, of Limpley Stoke, valued at 5s.—Prosecutor said he last saw the bar in a field called the Hanging, and missed it on the 18th of November. He afterwards saw it in the possession of the prisoner Russell, at the railway station yard. Prosecutor told Russell that he had a bar something like the one he had, but Russell said that it was not prosecutor's. Prosecutor afterwards saw the bar in the corner of the taproom at the Hop Pole Inn, and he called Russell into the private room, and told him he had stolen the bar from him. Prisoner admitted taking the bar, but not with the intention to steal it.—Hansell Nash, labourer, also gave evidence. The prisoners, who pleaded not guilty, were sentenced to 14 days' imprisonment.

BACK AGAIN.—Arthur King for being drunk and

Fig. 45 : Wiltshire Times & Trowbridge Advertiser, Nov 27 1886.



LIMPLEY STOKE.

CRIMEAN VETERAN'S FUNERAL.

Mr. James Male's Life of Adventure.

Mr. James Male, whose death at the age of 91 years we referred to in our last issue, had an extremely eventful life in his young days. Before he was nine years of age he had travelled the seas on a "tramp" steamer, and when he was eleven he crossed the Atlantic in a 100-ton vessel, the crossing lasting 33 days. Later he worked with his father at brick-making in France for the first railway in that country, and was just in time to join one of the last vessels that left Dieppe before the Revolution of 1847. Then he served in the Merchant Service for three years, making several trips to the West Indies, and joined the Royal Navy on the outbreak of the Crimean War in 1854. He served mainly in the Baltic, and was one of the three survivors who managed to swim ashore, although exposed to the fire of the Russian guns, when the sloop "Tiger" foundered in a storm in the Gulf of Riga. As a prisoner of war he had to walk from Riga to Moscow and thence to St. Petersburg, a distance of 3,000 miles, and the journey took nine months to accomplish. During this time he suffered great hardship owing to lack of food and clothing. He had more exciting adventures while chasing slavers around the African coast during the crusade to suppress the slave trade. He had drawn his Naval pension for 54 years, having completed his service in 1872, with the rank of Chief Quartermaster. He served for many years on the Bradford Rural Council, and the Parish Council of Limpley Stoke, and held the licence of the Hop Pole Inn for 26 years.

The funeral took place at Limpley Stoke Churchyard, the Rev. Morgan Powell (vicar) officiating. The mourners were Mr. J. W. Male, Mr. R. Male and Mr. E. Male (sons), Mrs. Collier (daughter), Mr. Percy Liddiard (grandson), Mr. J. E. Male and Mr. E. L. Male (grandsons), Mrs. R. Male (daughter-in-law), and Mr. E. Collier (son-in-law).

Four members of the Freshford British Legion (Messrs. A. Read, W. Templeman, V. Hussey, and W. Mumford) carried the Union Jack covered coffin, and the "Last Post" was sounded by Mr. V. Hussey.

Fig. 46 : Wiltshire Times, Saturday Nov 6, 1926.



With which are incorporated "Keene's Bath Journal," and the "Bath Weekly Argus."

Vol. 191 No. 10,137 *SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 1950*

LIMPLEY STOKE—The Hop Pole Inn.

Fig. 47 : Bath Chronicle, February 11, 1950

ADDENDUM - A

HOP POLE INN – Heritage Assessment Update – January 2023

The past year has afforded time to progress surveys and inspection of the building fabric. Assessment of the building fabric, its assembly and condition has informed understanding of significance.

The following investigations were undertaken in 2022:

- Building Fabric condition Survey – Rhys Brookes RIBA AABC, Conservation Architect
- Dendrochronology – appraisal of potential – Dr Martin Bridge FSA
- Drainage Camera Survey
- Trial Pits – Peter Blankley, Mann Williams - CARE

Trial Pits / External wall footings - The east cell walls have a stepped base which descends to approx. 400mm below the floor. None of the other walls have foundation with all terminating just below the original floor level. The floor is of a thick crust of cement probably early C20. This is laid over a compacted earth floor of approx. 100mm laid over the natural. The west most cell where the floor steps up has been raised. The earlier layer is indicated by an ash layer approx. 120mm below the current level.

Dendrochronology / Analysis of Timber Elements – The majority of the timber is elm with a few oak lintels. The elm cannot be dated due to a lack of base data on elm growth patterns. With further research the use of elm as part of the building structure could help place the period of construction. The oak lintels were too small to offer dates (33 rings), but their pattern of growth indicated they may have been sourced from a managed resource e.g. trees which had been subject to pollarding.

Of the timbers present the following appear to be in-situ and of an early phase or possibly original pieces of fabric:

- timber embedded in the east facing aspect of the central chimney (heavily impacted by beetle)
- embedded roof truss
- a fragment of an earlier roof structure embedded in the chimney visible within the roof
- central cell first floor structure; elm beams, joists, wide elm boards

The timber assessment confirmed the roof to be Victorian and the east cell first floor structure to be a poorly reassembled mixture of re-used elements.

Phasing – The evolution of the building remains largely as described although the east cell is likely late phase one circa late C16th. The sequence of the evolution of the main body of the building remains difficult to pin down. There are multiple phases of change to the envelope and adaption of the internal arrangement that disguise the earlies form. If the west cell is not part of the first phase observations of its form and level indicate that it must have been added soon after. Certainly, Thorpe's map of 1742 shows the plan at it fuller form save for the cellar. It is possible that the first phase was a simple single cell that has been largely lost within later phases. Repair works of 2023 have revealed a possible straight joint to the north elevation that aligns with that of the south. This supports the theory that an earlier possible late medieval single cell building was present. This would have been absorbed within the 16th century phase currently interpreted as phase 1. The summary of findings has served to consolidate understanding and guide a refinement in significance.

East cell floor (Phase 5) – *move from high to medium significance*

This is not original. It has not been possible to date the age of the timber or its re-assembly however it is probable that the timber is salvaged from this building and reused in the major renovation works of phase 5. Its current disarticulated form has diminished is significance and without deeper analysis, which is typically beyond the means of a project concerned with a GII building, little more can be deduced. The revised appraisal has concluded that the east cell floor should move from high to medium significance.

West Gable Damp (Phase 1)

The west gable is subject to a significant level of damp unlike that found in most buildings of a similar period and form. The suspicion is that a spring is causing the level of moisture in the ground to be consistently high. A review of Andrew and Drury's map of 1772 indicated a spring and brook running very close to the north west corner of the building. Following a complete camera survey of the foul network by the utility provider it has been concluded that the pipe discovered below the Smoking Room may be a drain installed in phase 5 as part of measures to minimise the impact of spring water at the west gable. This pipe no longer functions and the spring at the west gable is causing extensive saturation which appear to have been an issue for more than 50 years due to the extent of mid and late C20 materials used to minimise the extent of penetration and to renew lost fabric e.g. plasterboard, cement tanking, etc…

Smoking Room (Phase 5) – *Medium significance evidence of evolved use and some aesthetic value for its form - interior lost*

Progression of dry rot through 2021 and 2022 has resulted in the total loss of the interior of this room. As a result, a drain has been found hidden beneath the floor. This appears to run from an unidentified point at the west out into the road in the east. The room is part of the phase five, the most substantial phase of changes made.

Ground Floor Timber Partition to stair and cupboard (Phase 5) – *Move from low to medium significance.*

This screen appears to illustrate the use of the building as a guest house. The doors that open out into the corridor are numbered.