

HERITAGE STATEMENT

ERECTION OF DETACHED OAK FRAMED GARAGE WITH
HOME OFFICE/STORAGE OVER FOLLOWING
DEMOLITION OF EXISTING OUTBUILDING AT COMBE
FARM, COMBE LANE, BRATTON, WILTSHIRE



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November 2025

Introduction

This Heritage Statement has been prepared by Julius Bahn to accompany a householder planning application that seeks consent for a proposed oak framed detached garage which would replace an existing outbuilding in the same location within the site at Combe Farm. Combe Farm is an existing dwelling lying at the south-west edge of Bratton, a village situated approximately 7 miles to the south-west of Devizes.

Combe Farm is not a statutorily listed building but it lies within Bratton Conservation Area. St James Church, located away to the east of Combe Farm and to the south of the built-up area of Bratton village, is a Grade II* listed building.

This statement should be read in conjunction with the drawings enclosed with the accompanying application, including:

- Location Plan (drg. 97832/01);
- Existing Block Plan (drg. 97832/02);
- Proposed Block Plan (drg. 97832/03);
- Existing Elevations (drg. 97832/04);
- Existing Floor Plan & Roof Plan (drg. 97832/05);
- Proposed Elevations (drg. 97832/06);
- Proposed Floor Plans & Roof Plan (drg. 97832/07).

Julius Bahn will be designing and constructing the proposal on behalf of the property owner. Julius Bahn are one of the country's leading specialists in the design and construction of oak framed buildings for all kinds of domestic and other uses, utilising traditional mortise and tenon pegged joint carpentry techniques.

The Proposal

The proposal is to demolish an existing timber clad outbuilding to the east of the main house and replace it with a new oak framed detached garage. The existing outbuilding is currently used for domestic storage, particularly garden maintenance tools and equipment. The new replacement garage would comprise two open carport parking bays and one enclosed bay for replacement garden storage at ground floor, whilst the space created within the pitched roof above would be utilised as a home office and for additional domestic storage, accessed by an external staircase to the side.

The proposed garage would be an oak framed structure clad in horizontal weatherboard. It would have a dual-pitched roof with gable ends and finished in clay pain tiles.

Heritage Statement

Combe Farm lies at the south-western edge of the village of Bratton, which is a relatively large rural village located below the northern escarpment of the Salisbury Plain, approximately 7 miles south-west of Devizes and 3 miles east of Westbury. To the south of Bratton, on the escarpment of the plain, is located the Iron Age Camp of Bratton Castle and beyond that the well-known landmark of the Westbury White Horse. This area to the south of modern day Bratton was first settled up to 6,000 years ago, whilst Bratton Castle was built between 800BC and 50AD and its occupation continued into the Romano-British period.

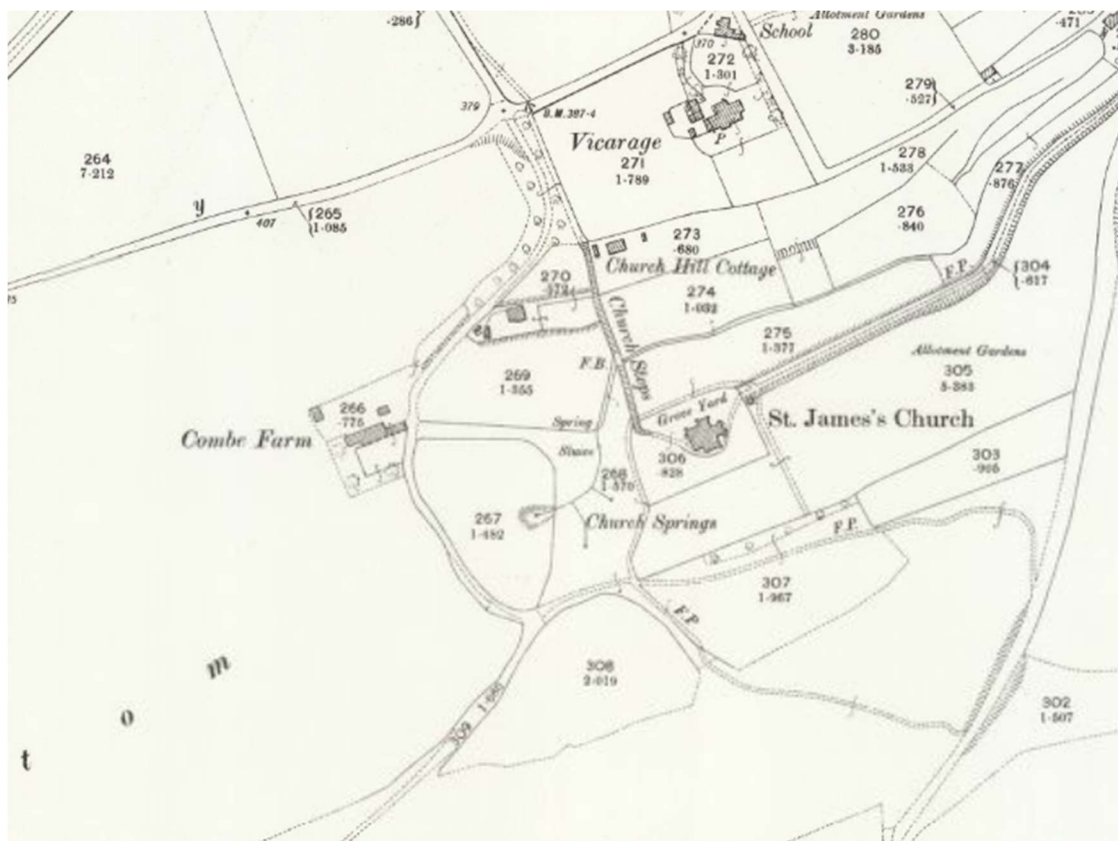
With the subsequent arrival of the Anglo-Saxons, three settlements were created in the valleys below Bratton Castle: Braectun, Littlestoke and Milbourne. St James Church, which survives today at the southern edge of Bratton, was built by the Normans (possibly on the site of an earlier Saxon chapel) to serve the manor of Littlestoke, although that former village had disappeared by the late C17. The historic disappearance of Littlestoke has left St James Church in an unusual location today, some distance outside the present village centre and reached via an historic narrow flight of stone steps which passes between fields and trees. St James Church is now a Grade II* listed building and the nearest listed building within Bratton to Combe Farm.

During the C17 the Longleat Estate bought large amounts of land within Bratton parish and its records include houses, cottages and farms that still exist today, mainly as timber framed buildings. Through the C18 there was an increase in building, which included a number of new houses and cottages as well as the rebuilding and extension of older houses, with the use of brick now becoming more popular. A second significant period for building came in the C20 post-war period with two housing estates added to the village along with other smaller infill developments.

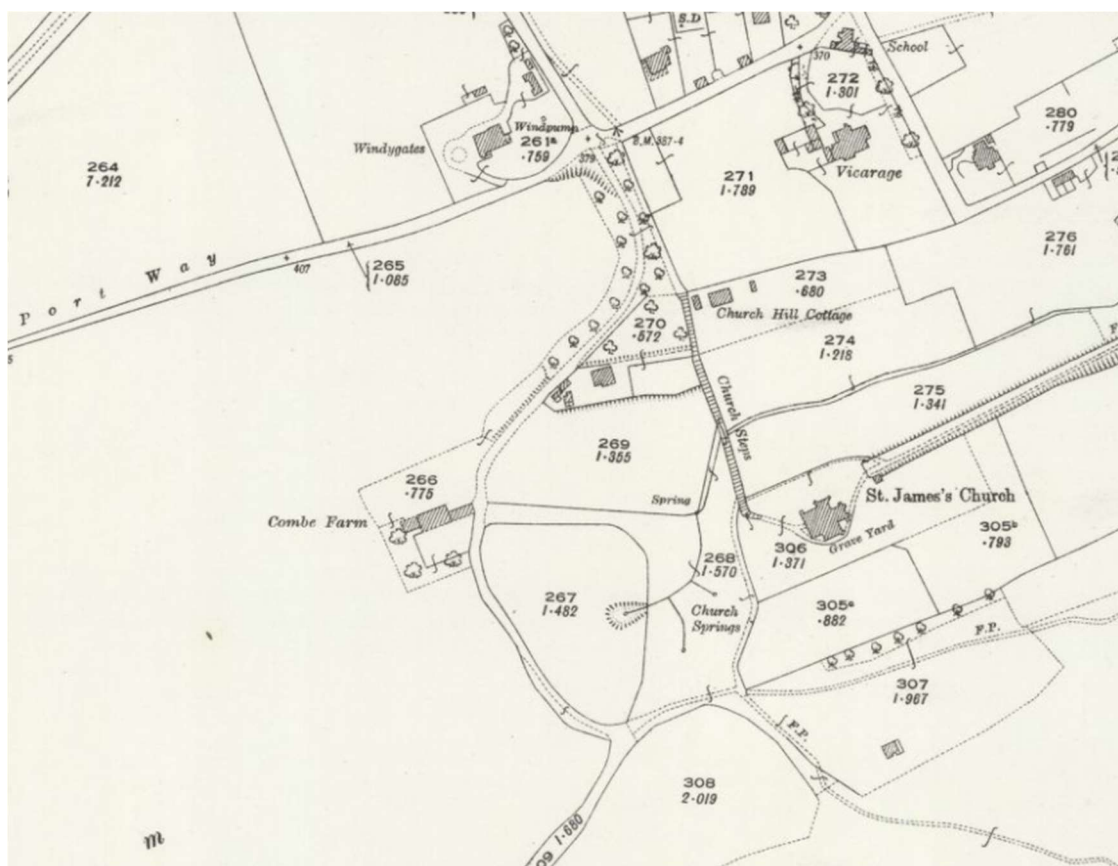
As a rural village, historically the principal occupation for people living in Bratton was farming, as well as other associated activities such as milling (for example at Luccombe Mill located along the river to the south-east of the village). Combe Farm would have historically formed part of a wider farmstead, although the house that stands there today is a modern post-war construction. The main building which appears on historic mapping (see below) is a former agricultural building that now serves as an outbuilding to the newer house. That outbuilding has previously received a succession of renewed planning consents to be converted to a separate dwelling, although none of those consents have ever been implemented.



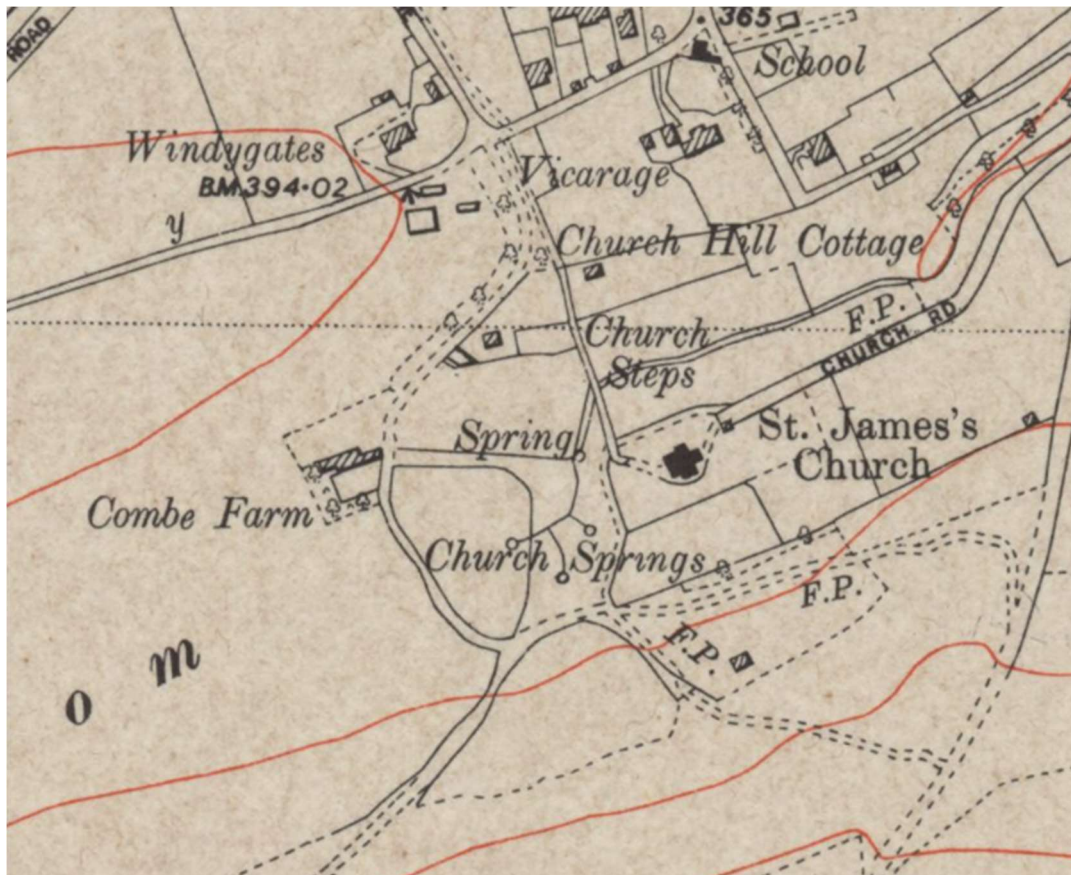
Extract from 25 inch to the mile edition OS map, published 1887 (source: maps.nls.uk).



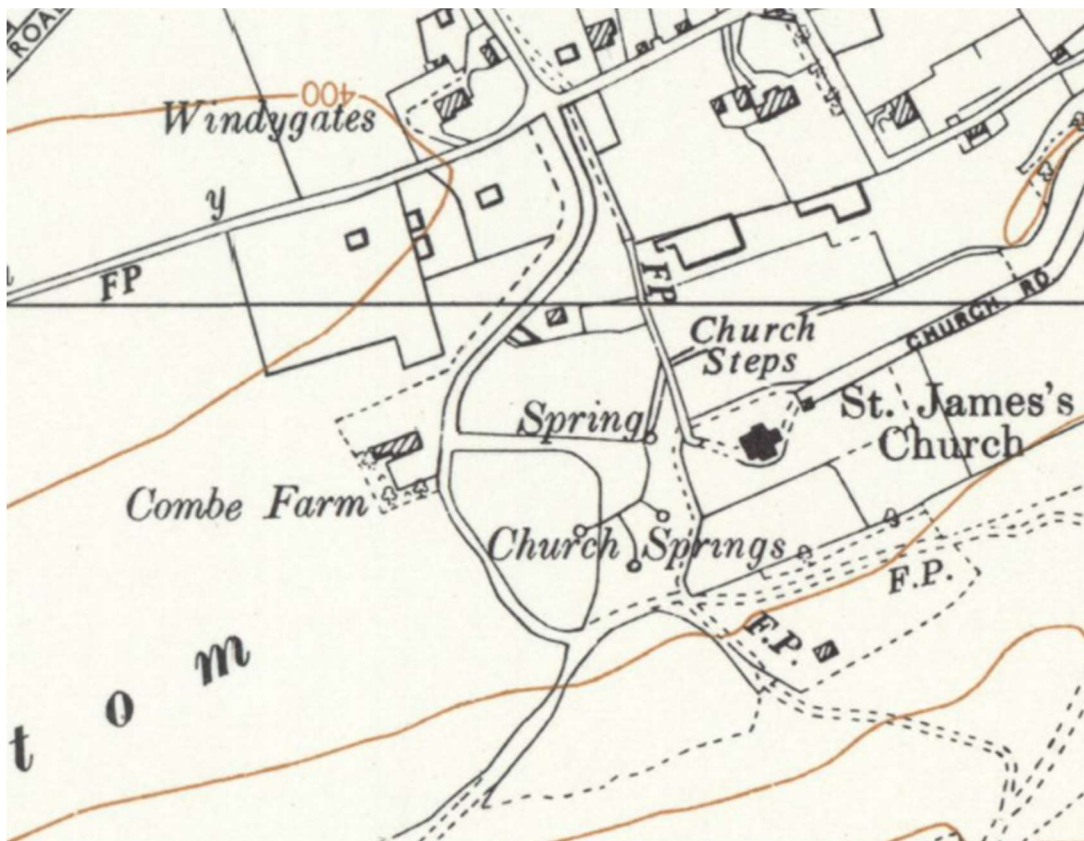
Extract from 25 inch to the mile edition OS map, published 1900 (source: maps.nls.uk).



Extract from 25 inch to the mile edition OS map, published 1924 (source: maps.nls.uk).



Extract from 6 inch to the mile edition OS map, published 1938 (source: maps.nls.uk).



Extract from 1:10,500 edition OS map, published 1961 (source: maps.nls.uk).

The historic map extracts above evidence how little this part of Bratton village changed up to the second half of the C20. The present house at Combe Farm does not appear on the 1961 map, nor does other contemporaneous infill housing along Combe Lane, whilst additional buildings along Port Way to the north are only just starting to appear. This supports the present house at Combe Farm being a modern construction and therefore possessing no particular historic value.

The existing outbuilding that it is proposed to demolish and replace with the new garage also does not appear on the historic map extracts, again evidencing this is a modern outbuilding. Indeed the form of construction of this outbuilding appears modern as it incorporates modern sawn softwood and profiled sheet roofing panels. The loss of this outbuilding in itself would not have any significant impact on the wider heritage interest or setting of Bratton Conservation Area, particularly as the outbuilding is in an increasingly dilapidated condition. In addition, with the presence of the modern day house at Combe Farm, plus the existing modern outbuilding within the site as described, little of the historic appearance and character of the site as a former farmstead now survives, so the site's contribution to the historic setting of Bratton is limited.

Bratton Conservation Area takes in the majority of the built-up area of the village, along with an area extending out to the south-east to include Luccombe Mill and the less densely developed area to the south-west which includes Combe Farm and St James Church. In contrast to the more densely developed settlement pattern in the centre of the village, the part of the Conservation Area including Combe Farm is characterised by dispersed individual buildings separated by large gardens, fields/paddocks and groups of trees. Routes through this part of the Conservation Area tend to be narrow lanes and footpaths which prohibit through traffic and restrict views.

The proposed garage, which would directly replace an existing outbuilding in the same location within the site, would not significantly alter that dispersed development pattern. Combe Farm is located at the end of Combe Lane which is narrow and bordered by tall hedgerows and groups of trees. Because of this the proposed garage would not be readily visible from outside the site, so no principal or key views through the Conservation Area would be affected. Buildings within the site would remain well spaced from each other and the proposed garage would be sited to maintain a significant gap to the main house and the former agricultural barn opposite, retaining the characteristic dispersed development pattern within this part of the Conservation Area, albeit the proposal would not be readily visible from other areas within or outside the Conservation Area anyway.

Notwithstanding the above, the use of an oak framed design has been selected as a traditional rural building material and as a reflection of some of the older historic timber framed buildings within the village. So the proposed facing materials and traditional form of construction would be sympathetic to the wider rural village setting.

With regard to impact on the Grade II* listed St James Church, that building is located some 170m away from where the proposal would be sited, and there are other structures, trees and landscape features in between. So the proposed garage would not be visible within the setting of that significant listed building and would have no material impact on its architectural or historic value.

In conclusion, it is not considered that the proposal would have any unduly harmful impact on the character and setting of this part of Bratton Conservation Area. The characteristic dispersed development pattern of this part of the Conservation Area would be maintained, key views through the Conservation Area would not be detrimentally affected, and the setting of the listed St James Church would not be harmed. The existing house at Combe Farm and the existing outbuilding to be replaced are modern structures with no significant individual heritage merit in themselves.

For the above reasons it is considered that the proposed demolition of the existing outbuilding and the erection of the new garage would cause no material harm to the character or setting of Bratton Conservation Area, or the contribution Combe Farm and its grounds make to that setting and character as described in this statement above.