



**Showell Farmhouse and granary,
Showell, Chippenham, SN15 2NU**

**Historic Building report
Report no. B6909**

January 2021



East elevation

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1. Introduction

Showell Farmhouse is a substantial grade II listed building, formerly part of a corn and dairy farm. It is found in a rural position in the hamlet of Showell approximately 2 miles south-west of Chippenham in the parish of Lacock, and equally distant from the centre of the historic village of Lacock. The land on which the farm is situated is cornbrash; an oolitic limestone.

The farm was part of the estate of Thomas Kington in the 18th century, and passed to the Rummings family until 1877. The family were almost certainly responsible for the present appearance of Showell farmhouse and many of the additions to it, though for much of the time they appear to have leased it out. By 1987 the process of conversion of redundant farm buildings to domestic dwellings had begun with the 18th century barn, and in 2005 Showell Farmhouse was divided into two; the east/west range containing an 18th century stable became a separate dwelling known as the Dove House. With the separation of the main range from the service range, the present owners of Showell Farmhouse seek to form self-contained services with appropriate exterior access at the rear of the building.

2. Summary of main points

- A distinct farm estate and hamlet in the parish of Lacock belonging to the Kington family in the 18th century
- The core is a courtyard plan with 18th century relic farm buildings of barn, stables and granary. Early 19th century and later replacement of outbuildings and additions, probably coincide with updating of the farmhouse for the Rummings family
- Barn and stables now dwellings in separate occupation
- L-shaped farmhouse, built by the mid-17th century with continuous alterations and rebuilding in the 18th and 19th centuries including evidence of blocking-in of upper and lower west-facing openings in dining room and bedroom 1 when single-storey kitchen added c1840
- Previous former dairy, now present kitchen and bedroom over with upper and lower partitions added in the early-mid 18th century
- Present utility and bathroom at north end with separate stair are an infilling between two ranges to form a dairy **after** 1840
- Farmhouse divided into two separate dwellings in 2005

3. Instruction

In accordance with instruction by Mel and Gary Bennett, a historic building appraisal of Showell Farmhouse and granary was undertaken in January 2021. The results, incorporated in the following report, present a photographic and textual record of the building as it now stands, supported by survey drawings, map and documentary evidence where relevant. This is followed by cautious archaeological interpretation.

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4. Purpose of document

This report is intended to provide supporting information to assist in determining a listed building application in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework¹ paragraph 128 which states:

In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes or has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.

5. Designations

Showell Farmhouse forms a mixed group of designated and non-designated assets. The listed buildings are Showell Farmhouse (grade II), listed in 1960, the barn to the south-east of Showell Farmhouse (grade II), also listed in 1960, and a staddle granary to the south of Showell Farmhouse (grade II) listed in January 1987.

LACOCK CHIPPENHAM ROAD, (A350) ST 97 SW 1/33 Showell Farmhouse 20.12.60 GV II

Farmhouse, c1820 with late C17 attached wing. Main range is red brick with ashlar dressings, slate low-pitched roof, coped gables and end stacks. Formal 2-storey, 3-window front with ashlar plinth, flush quoins, moulded cornice, parapet and flush window surrounds. Twenty-pane outer windows, 12-pane to first floor centre over ashlar doorcase, broad elliptical-arched surround with keystone framing full-width fanlight over 6-panel door and sidelights. Attached wing is 2-storey, rubble stone with slate roof. To left, cyma-moulded 2-light recessed mullion-and-transom window with hoodmould and 2-light window above, centre door in chamfered surround with rounded shoulders. To right is double-fronted stable section with two 2-light beaded mullion windows of C18 type and centre door to each floor. Dove openings to upper floor. Across forecourt is early C18 screen wall, originally with iron railings, now with ashlar block walls between piers to 2 gateways. Rusticated piers with gate stops, cornices and urn finials. Early C19 iron gates. Wing rear wall has chimney gable and 4-light mullion-and-transom window to right.

LACOCK CHIPPENHAM ROAD, (A350) ST 97 SW 1/34 Barn to south east of Showell Farmhouse 20.12.60 (formerly listed with farmhouse) GV II

Barn, C18, rubble stone with timber-framed side walls clad in corrugated iron. Bridgwater tile roof with coped gables. Projecting gabled east cart-entry with lean-to additions each side. Side walls on rubble stone plinth. South end blocked Tudor-arched opening. Three-bay, 2-purlin roof with tie-

¹ Department for Communities and Local Government, 27th March 2012

beam-and-collar trusses. A 1775 map of Showell and Notton lands of T. Kington in W.R.O. shows barn.

Listing NGR: ST9094070932

LACOCK CHIPPENHAM ROAD, (A350) ST 97 SW 1/35 Granary to south of Showell Farmhouse GV II

Granary, late C18, weatherboarded timber frame with Bridgwater tile half-hipped roof, raised on 3 x 3 staddlestones.

Avon Vales National Character Area

Showell Farm occurs within the Avon Vales national landscape character 117². This is characterised as an area of mixed settlement patterns with medium to small farms. Stretching along the oolitic limestone belt which crosses the north-west corner of Wiltshire, much of the vernacular building is of limestone after 1600, with roofs of stone slates. 70% of recorded Wiltshire farms retain some historic character with 51% retaining more than 50% of their historic form. 20% of Wiltshire farmsteads retain a pre-1700 farmhouse. Showell farm falls into both categories and is typical of this landscape character.

The Photo Image Project (2006) recorded medium rates of conversion in this area of listed buildings to non-agricultural (primarily domestic) uses – 29.8%, the national average being 34%. Dereliction of unlisted farm buildings is a visible issue, as evidenced by the loss of at least one building (pigsties replaced by a brick building) at Showell Farm since 1984.

6. Acknowledgements

Building Recorders: Report prepared by Dorothy Treasure at Wiltshire Buildings Record, Wiltshire & Swindon History Centre, Cocklebury Road, Chippenham, Wiltshire SN15 3QN Tel. 01249 705508 email to: dorothy.treasure@wiltshire.gov.uk

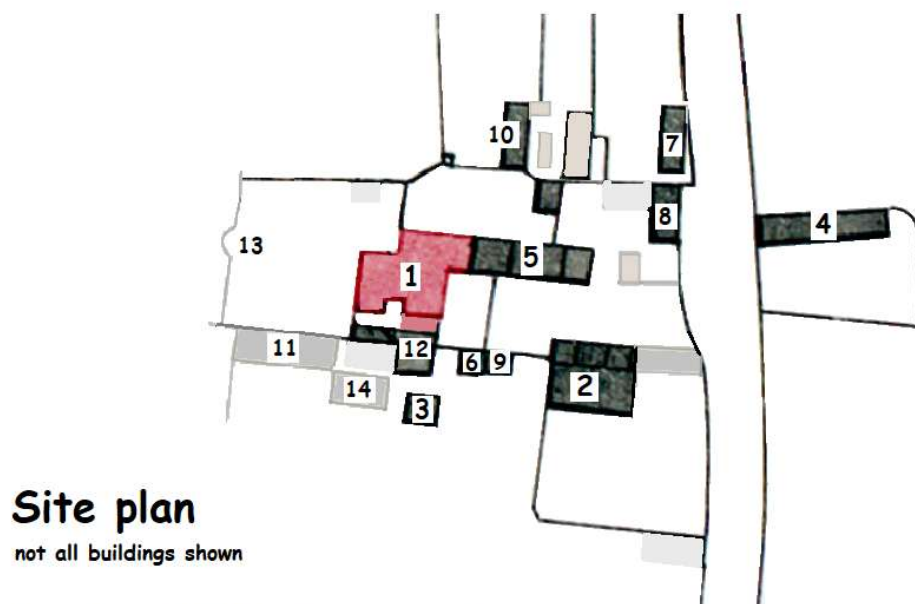
Documentary Research: Dorothy Treasure at Wiltshire Buildings Record

Survey Drawings: Kindly supplied by A Harlow & Son, 01225 938329

Additional Material: Photographs of roof over bedroom 3 supplied by Gary Bennett

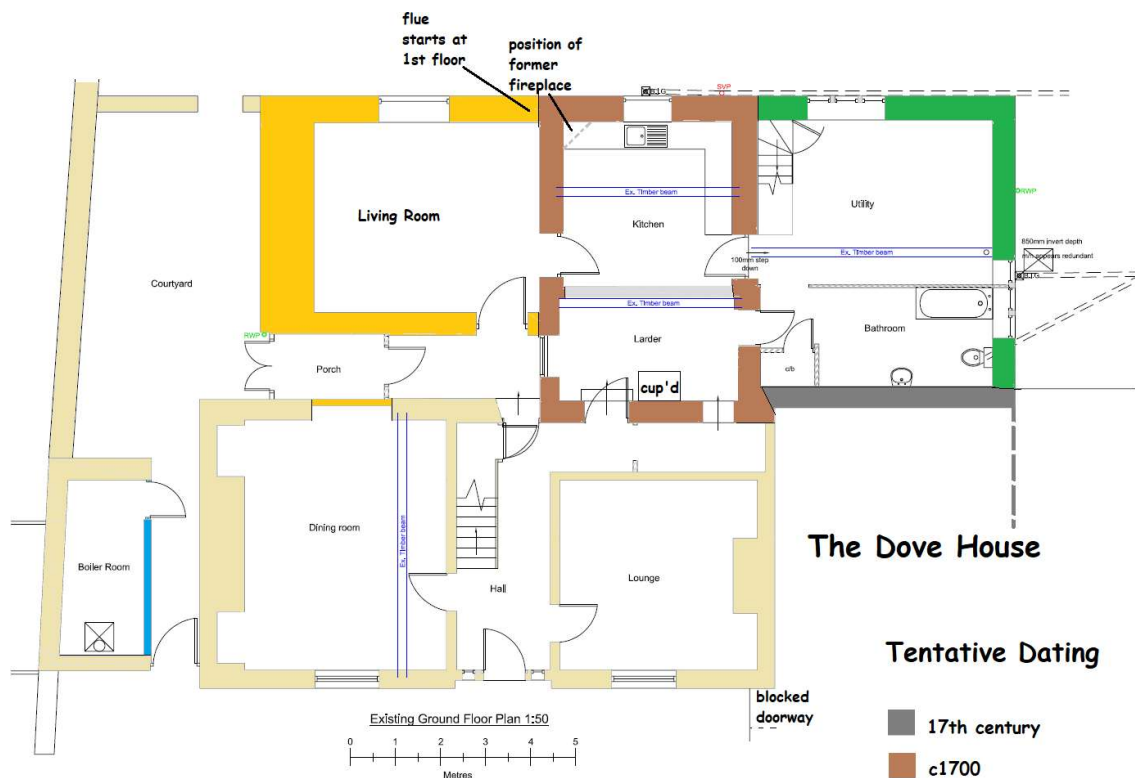
² <https://wshc.org.uk/images/Archaeology/NCA-117-Avon-Vales-Statement.pdf>

7. Annotated site and floor plans



- Site plan**
not all buildings shown
1. Farmhouse (17th-19th centuries)
 2. Barn (18th century)
 3. Granary (late 18th century)
 4. Shelter shed (early 19th century)
 5. Nag stable and dovecote (later 18th century)
 6. Wash/bacon-smoking house (early 19th century?)
 7. Cowshed (between 1900-1924)
 8. Calf unit (early 19th century)
 9. Pig sties rebuilt after 1986
 10. Cowshed (early 19th century)
 11. Cart horse stable (between 1840-1886)
 12. Outside woodshed/boiler house/store (between 1840-1886)
 13. Remains of circular garden feature (between 1840-1886)
 14. Dairy (after 1924)

Fig.1 Site plan based on early Ordnance Survey mapping



Ground floor



Tentative Dating

- 17th century
- c1700
- c1830
- between c1830-1840
- between 1840-c1886
- early C21

Plans supplied by A Harlow & Son
Annotations: D Treasure, Jan 2021

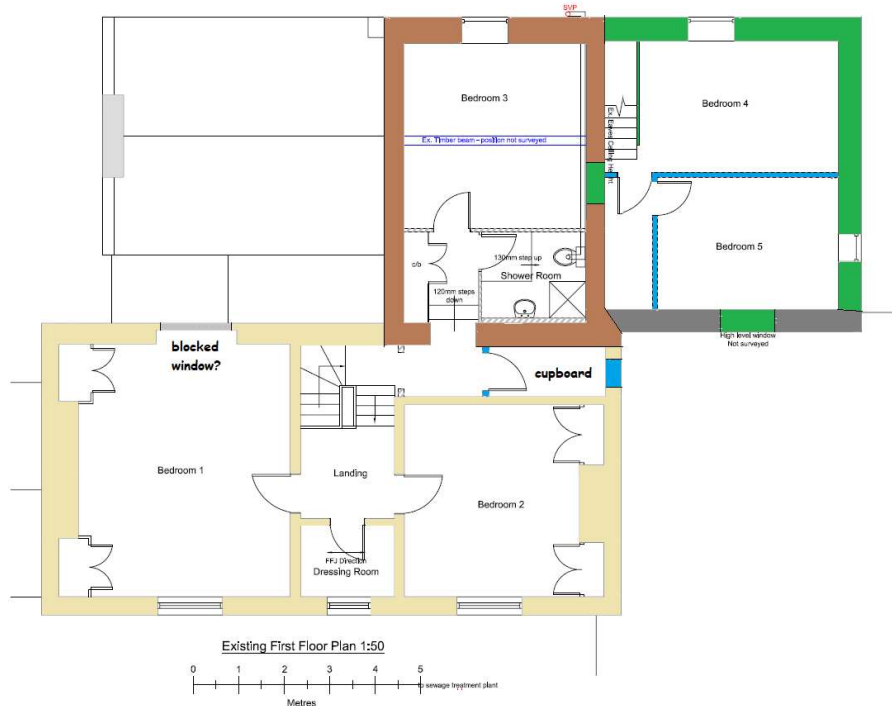


Fig.2 Annotated floor plans

8. The History of Showell Farm

The hamlet of Showell

Very little has been written about the area known as Showell. One source suggests that the name Showell may relate to the old English name for the number seven³ or perhaps from the personal name Sewal, Siwal, Sewald or Siwald, occurring in middle English⁴. It forms a small hamlet on the north edge of the parish of Lacock presently comprising of the Showell Farm complex, Showell Cottages, and mid-later 20th century buildings on the east side of the road (**fig.5**). These include Showell Nurseries, and a few detached houses. Excavation at Showell Farm by Cotswold Archaeology Trust in has discovered substantial evidence for the existence of an early Roman settlement and field system there. Much of the settlement lies under the railway embankment and the site of Showell Nurseries. Finds suggest it was of high status⁵.

One of the earliest mentions of the name Showells is found in early deeds of 1649-1729 relating to property at Notton in Lacock, including fields named Home Close, the Lye, Great and Little Dunloe, the Marshes, Showells, Poophill and Loggar⁶. An 18th century abstract in the same archive relates to the title of Thomas Kington to an estate called Showells farm⁷.

In a book of five maps of farms and lands in Lacock dated to c1750 the site of Showell farm is shown⁸ then marked as 'Shouhill Farm' (**figs.3 & 4**). The isolated site shows only two buildings: an L-shaped farmhouse and a barn in the same positions as today. No other buildings are shown, though there are likely to have been other structures on the site such as smaller outbuildings, hay-ricks and fenced enclosures.

³ http://keithbriggs.info/7_9_placenames.html

⁴ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sewell_\(name\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sewell_(name))

⁵ Cotswold Archaeology Trust: Archaeological excavation of November 1999

⁶ Wiltshire & Swindon Archive Service ref: [695/1](#)

⁷ Wiltshire & Swindon Archive Service ref: [137/60](#)

⁸ Wiltshire & Swindon History Centre ref: [2664/1/2D/21](#)

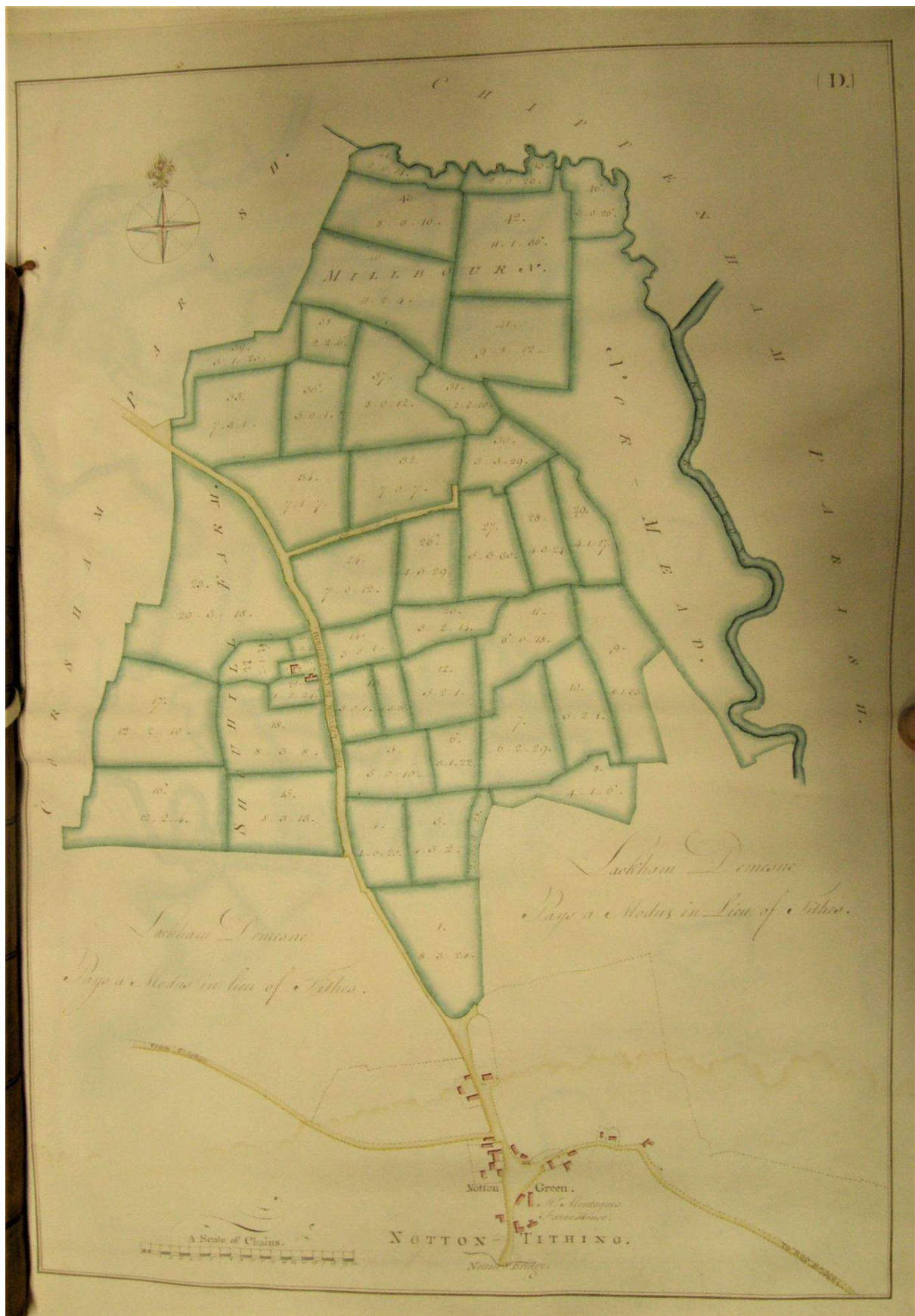


Fig.3 Map of c1750 showing lands belonging to the Lackham desmesne, ref: ([2664/1/2D/21](#))



Fig.4 Detail of above focussing on the site of Showell Farm

By 1773 Showell is shown as a distinct hamlet north of Notton (**fig.5**). All the development is shown on the west side of the road on the site of Showell Farm.



Fig.5 Extract from Andrews and Dury map of Wiltshire, 1773. Showell is at the top of the image

Showell Farm evolution

The original house

It is evident that the present west section of the Dove House is the only unaltered part of the original L-shaped farmhouse, dating to at least the mid-17th century. It has a (reconstructed) heavily turned balustrade to a staircase against the west end, and moulded cross windows. Yeoman farmhouses were often of three ground floor rooms with chambers above. The present west gable wall of the Dove House now forms a party wall with Showell Farmhouse and contains a blocked cross window⁹. Internal alterations in the roof of the older wing indicate that the hip was formed when the new east-facing wing of c1830 was built. The subsequent later 18th century addition to the east of this older range was most likely originally a carriage horse stable with hayloft over combined with a dovecote¹⁰.

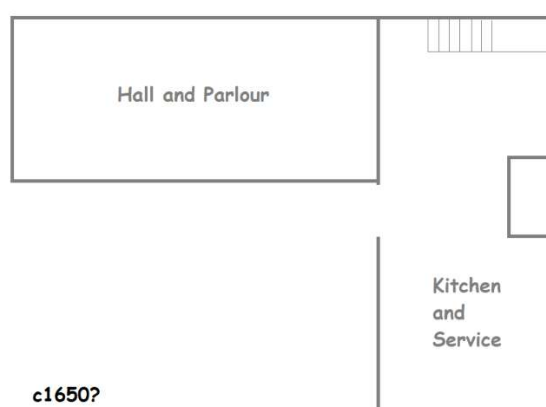


Fig.6 Conjectural plan of the early farmhouse

Evidence from the Lackham desmesne map of c1750 shows that the original farm was L-shaped at that time (**fig.6**). This might account for the entrance hall and stair occurring at the west end of the building rather than in the centre. The kitchen may then have been associated with the chimney projecting from the north wall, now belonging to The Dove House. There are precedents for L-shaped 17th century houses. Two examples are a timber-framed house in Horton, near Devizes with the parlour in a rear wing. The other example is Great Lypiatt Farm in Corsham dating to the late 16th century/early 17th century with a dairy and kitchen in rear wings¹¹.

18th century

It is likely that the rear wing of Showell farm, that part now occupied by the present kitchen and larder, was added perhaps around 1700 (**fig.7**). It was unheated originally and may have started as a dairy. The fireplace was built on subsequently across the corner when the single-storey kitchen was added, a practice found in the earlier 18th century and also in the earlier 19th century.

⁹ Personal Communication – present ownership

¹⁰ Planning report and architectural justification to support proposed works to The Dove House: 26th May 2006, supporting document within planning application [N/06/01421/FUL](#)

¹¹ Slocombe, P: Wiltshire Farmhouses & Cottages 1500-1850: WBR, 1988

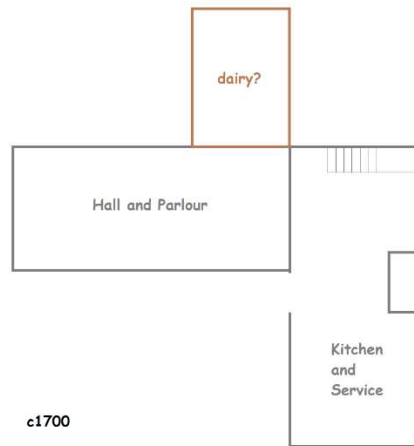


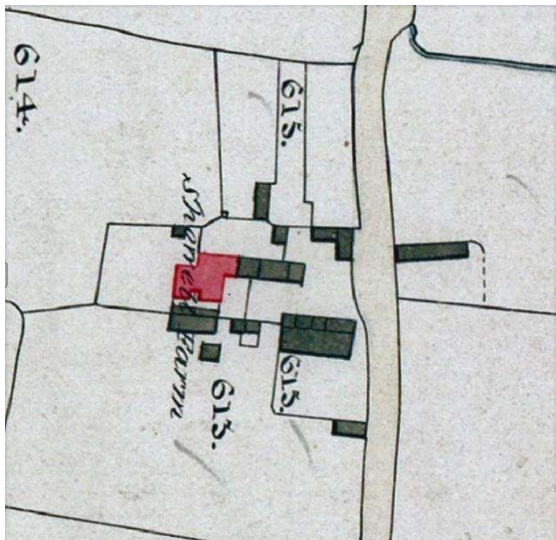
Fig.7 Addition of rear wing, possibly dairy

19th century

An assignment of 1801 documents Thomas Rummings purchase of the Showell estate¹².

Around 1830 the house was extended by a new symmetrical brick house with stone dressings (**fig.9**). The shallow king-post roof was covered in Welsh slate and partly hidden behind a parapet. The central entrance was accommodated under an elliptical arch with combined side-lights. Typical of the period are the large 10x10 sashes, designed for far-reaching views across the open countryside.

In 1840 the tithe map shows that the Rummings family still owned and occupied Showell Farm which was described as a homestead¹³. They owned land on both sides of the road, with the farmstead forming a loose courtyard. Only one building, a skilling (open-fronted cowshed), was situated on the east side of the road. The tithe also tells us that the Rummings family also part-owned and leased six cottages in Notton, now two houses numbered 18 & 19 Notton, as well as owning and leasing Showell Cottages just to the north of the farm.



Further alterations comprising a new single-storey kitchen together with the enclosure of the service yard, and the addition of a fireplace to the former dairy were made (**fig.9**). It is likely that the rear of the dining room and the bedroom above once had west-facing windows that were blocked up when the single-storey kitchen was added by c1840. An area of continuous brickwork extending between ground and first floor indicates their position.

Fig.8 Extract from Lacock Tithe map, 1840

¹² Wiltshire & Swindon History Centre ref: 44/1/5

¹³ See Appendix 1

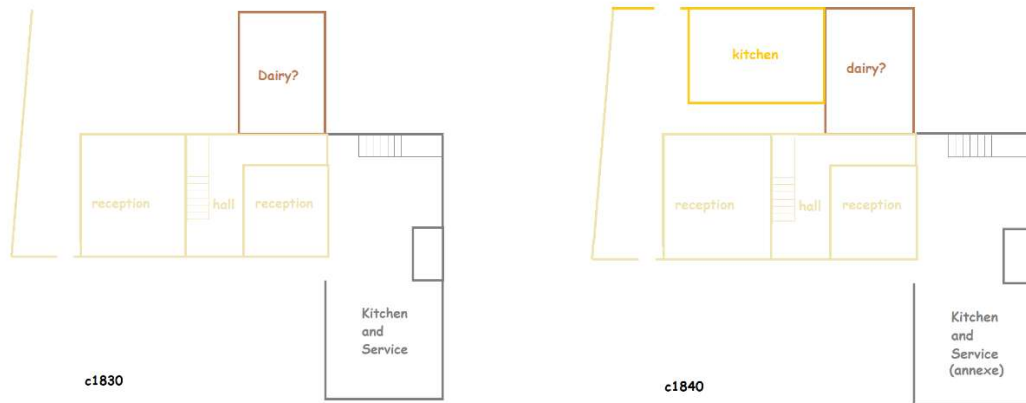


Fig.9 Rapid change in layout in the earlier 19th century

In 1870 Thomas Rummings, then described as a gentleman of Chippenham, mortgaged the farm to John Daws, a gentleman of Littleton Drew, to secure £1600 with interest payments of 4%¹⁴. The plan attached to the document shows lands and the principal buildings of the farm within their enclosure¹⁵. The smaller buildings including the granary and the skilling to the east of the road are not shown.

Rummings did not live at Showell, but rented it on a yearly lease. In 1877 Rummings sold the farm. At that time the tenant was Henry Cannon, who paid £400 per annum. It is likely that it was then purchased by the Lackham Estate, retaining Cannon as the tenant as he was still there in 1878¹⁶. The farmhouse was then described as 'a comfortable and pleasantly situated residence with walled garden, convenient paddocks, well-arranged homestead and suitable buildings'¹⁷.

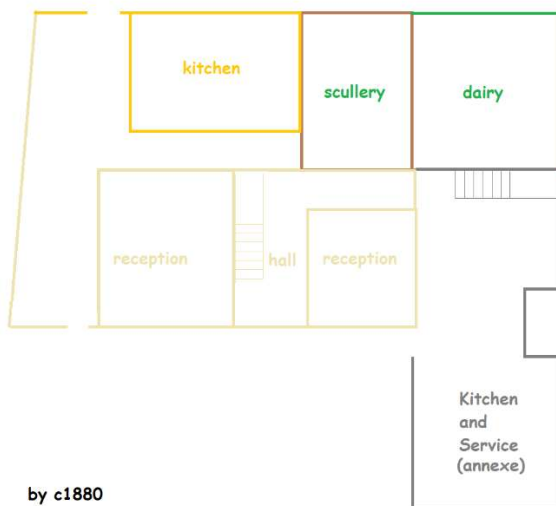


Fig.10 Plan of farmhouse by c1880

¹⁴ Wiltshire & Swindon History Centre ref: 44/1/5

¹⁵ See appendix 2

¹⁶ Owens and Co's directory, 1878

¹⁷ See appendix 3



Fig.11 Photograph of Showell Farmhouse from Lackham Estate Catalogue ref: 1409/15/243

20th century

In 1927 Showell Farm along with other property belonging to the Lackham Estate including: Great Notton farm, New End farm, cottages and land, Nash Hill farm was sold¹⁸. The sale particulars describe it as 'an important and valuable dairy farm'. The description of the property includes mention of 'old kitchen with stone slab floor' and 'second kitchen' and 'scullery with copper and hand-pump to well'. Close to the house was a 'two-stall nag stable' and 'harness room' for carriage and riding horses, and also a separate cart horse stable for seven with a large loft over. By then the dairy was in a timber and corrugated iron building. Numerous other buildings including cowsheds and pigsties are mentioned. Within the sale particulars is a photograph of the farmhouse in 1927 (**fig.11**). It shows railings on top of the dwarf walls now gone.

¹⁸ Wiltshire & Swindon History Centre ref: [1409/15/243](#)

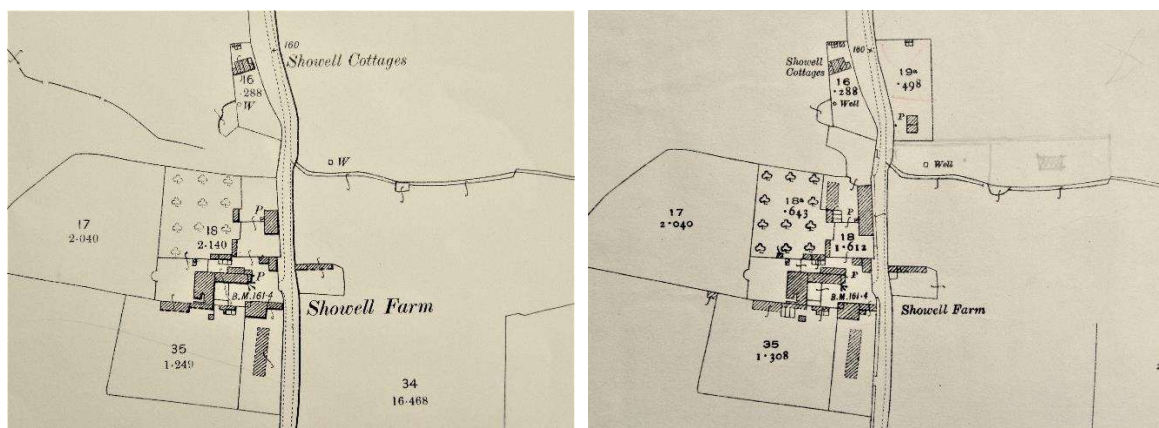


Fig.12 Ordnance Survey Map extract, 1900 & 1924 editions

The Kelly's and other trade directories hold information about local traders and farmers in parish order. Following Henry Cannon, the Lackham Estate's tenant in 1878 there was a rapid succession of tenants: Edwin Fry (1895), William Spackman (1899), Sidney Perrett (1900). In 1903-20 Robert Marsh Rowles had a relatively long tenancy. In 1923 a quick succession of tenants was resumed first by James Gay, replaced in 1927 by Guy Frank King. In 1931 the farmer was Herbert Roger Forrest. By 1939 he had been replaced by Ernest Fras. Ashman. At that time the farm comprised over 150 acres. In 1968 Showell Farm was offered for sale again. Described as a 'residential dairy and corn farm' of 176 $\frac{3}{4}$ acres, the owners, Mr & Mrs NWJ Bell, were moving to a larger farm. The farmhouse was said to be an 'excellent, immaculately decorated and extremely well modernized residence of considerable charm and character...'.¹⁹

On 27th October 1987 approval was given to erect a double garage at Showell Farm²⁰. On 21st December 1987 an applicant by the name of Bailey gained approval for conversion of the listed barn²¹ and for part demolition and conversion of the barn to domestic use.

In 2005 Showell farmhouse was divided into two by Mr & Mrs RJ Telling with associated external and internal alterations^{22 23}: the older, 17th house and 18th century addition that was previously used as an agricultural workshop, was sold off as a separate dwelling known as the Dove House, leaving Showell Farmhouse as the c1830 wing together with the granary and outbuildings to the west²⁴. The Dove house was subsequently restored by Olivia Hough including the conversion of the 18th century workshop/hayloft to residential. Also the construction of a glazed garden room and stone boundary wall. (Amendment to 04.01984.COU) and the like-for-like replacement of the original balustrade²⁵.

¹⁹ Wiltshire & Swindon History Centre ref: 1246/27

²⁰ Planning application N/87/01915/FUL

²¹ Planning application N/87/02608/REM

²² Planning application N/04/01985/LBC

²³ Planning application N/04/01984/COU

²⁴ Statement of Significance, 4th July 2014, within Planning application [14/06111/LBC](#)

²⁵ Planning application 06/01422/LBC & 06/01421/COU

9. Description

Exterior

Showell Farmhouse faces east (**fig.13**) across a small garden enclosed by a dwarf wall (missing its pier-high railings) with gate piers (**fig.14**). The principal face is constructed symmetrically over two storeys. The entrance is contained within an elliptical arch with an original overhead. On either side of the older 6-panel door are integral side-lights with replacement glazing. Plain ashlar frames contain 10x10 sashes.



Fig.13 Main east elevation Fig.14 Rusticated gate piers with urn finials and probably original gate

To the left is a pantile-roofed rubblestone outbuilding housing the boiler and stone passageway into the back of the house (**fig.15**). The doorway has been repointed and a new concrete lintel has replaced the likely timber one (**fig.16**). The partition to the boiler room has been replaced in concrete blocks. The tithe map of 1840 indicates that the passage was not roofed originally.



Fig.15 Outbuilding and passageway to reach service areas to the south of the house

Fig.16 Through passageway with likely original timber lintel replaced with masonry

The area to the south of the house comprises a concreted yard with an open-fronted lean-to fuel house roofed in slate, standing on timber posts (**fig.17**). This appears to be leaning against a rubblestone wall lined with concrete blocks. At the rear of the house is a modern roofed passage between the principal reception room and the single-storey kitchen block, formerly unroofed until the later 20th century. Of interest is an area of brickwork extending in a central full-height strip from ground to eaves (**fig.18**). Where the render has come away, brickwork is visible. The most obvious explanation is that the reception room once enjoyed views to the west before the single-storey kitchen wing was added before 1840. Subsequent to this addition the ground and first floor west-facing windows were blocked up. The kitchen was an addition very soon after the new farmhouse was built in c1830, as the current footprint is seen on the 1840 tithe map. It is likely that the original kitchen was in the older wing and later relocated behind the principal reception room.



Fig.17 Rear yard



Fig.18 Modern passage between front and rear ranges



Fig.19 South gable end of kitchen

The single-storey kitchen has vertical joint to the rest of the farmhouse. It is of rubblestone with some brick infill of openings. A small single light at the south end was filled in early with rubblestone. The gable end is partially in brick along the line of the flues, and a low, infilled opening seems to indicate the position, perhaps, of a projection of a bread oven (**fig.19**).

The rear elevation facing west across the garden comprises two unmatching parallel ranges with half-hipped gable ends (**fig.20**). Although there is no vertical joint, both physical evidence and documentary evidence shows that the north range was added after 1840.

This addition is most likely to have been a dairy with cheese room over. Given there is no obvious joint, either vertical or ragged, to show that it was an

addition, it is also impossible to see where the exterior door was, which it would have certainly had once. Rubblestone additions weather quickly to the same appearance. The former door may have been through one of the present windows facing west.

Dairying had become a major industry in the county in the 18th century and dairy workshops were often added at the back of farmhouses, or accommodated in-line with the main range²⁶. The windows frames at first floor are both the same plain ashlar as at the front, despite being of different dates. The ground floor opening to the present kitchen is modern under an old timber lintel. The former dairy has two large 3-light plain frames on the north and west sides.



Fig.20 Rear (west) elevation

The north elevation stonework appears to be continuous from the Dove House, though the 1840 tithe award map shows the dairy to be an addition. Shading on the stone relates to staining from the gutter. At first floor is a Crittal-type casement window that has been let in (**fig.21**).



Fig.21 North elevation of dairy

²⁶ Slocombe, P: Wiltshire farmhouses and cottages 1500-1850 WBR 1988

Interior

Entrance Hall

Tall ceiling heights throughout the front range. The hall is central in the building and entered through a 6-panel door on butt hinges. Double fascia architrave with close-moulded element. Stilted arched overlight spanning door and 16-pane side-lights with plain glazing bars. The elliptical overlight has narrow chamfered bars and it is supposed that the side-lights have been replaced as the glass itself is modern.



Fig.22 Straight flight stair

The floorboards here are of oak with signs of shrinkage gaps, so suggesting these are original. Adjacent to the front door a foot-well has been cut in. At the rear of the passage are several softwood repairs at the back door (**fig.23**).

The ceiling is covered in a moulded paper with modern coving. On both cross walls is a type of moulded covering to the height of a moulded cornice, perhaps Lincrusta or Anaglypta, popular around 1900. This is now painted white but would have been wood-grained originally.

Good oak dog-leg stair with stick balusters and a shaped mahogany handrail (**fig.22**). Curtail step wreaths around a metal newel. The handrail ramps up to a short upper flight. A passage leads through to the kitchen at the back with a passage at right angles to the original kitchen

and other services.



Fig.23 Limestone step with Pennant sandstone repair



Fig.24 Borrowed light into larder and door to rear of house

South reception room

The principal reception room. Plain ceiling, probably with original lath and plaster, with boxed or plastered transverse beam. Plain walls with good, high skirting board with deep mouldings as hall. There is an elliptical-headed recess in the rear wall which very probably contained a garden doorway (**fig.25**). The south wall has a central fireplace, now with a 30s or 40s moulded tiled surround and raised hearth. On either side are display cabinets with shaped shelves and elliptical heads (**fig.26**). 6-panel door and 10 x 10 sash, no horns, moulded glazing bars. Panelled below. Suspended, carpeted floor.



Fig.25 South reception room with rear arched recess Fig.26 Arched recesses either side of fireplace

North reception room

The smaller of the two reception rooms. Plain ceiling as above, modern coving. Suspended carpeted floor as above. Fireplace surround removed, replaced with a C20 surround recently removed to show outline of original surround²⁷. Ragged edges show a hair plaster. Plain stone lintel with brick nostril back infilled during 20th century with cemented rubble. Art Nouveau green tiled hearth indicate the removed fireplace surround was probably remodelled around 1900. On either side is a round-arched staff-moulded recess, now with glass shelves and modern cupboards (**fig.27**). 6-panel door and window as in south room.



Fig.27 Fireplace with flanking recesses

Passage

This is an early addition to the main house that was present by 1840. It is now a sitting room. The fireplace took up the whole south gable wall, and has since been lined so that no features are now visible. This left a passageway on the south side between the kitchen and dining room (south reception room). The passage was originally open to the sky, and was not enclosed until at least the late-20th century. The present door and side-lights are later 20th century. There is a borrowed light opposite the side door between the passage and scullery (**fig.24**). The light is within a blocked doorway. Remains of a wall-mounted cupboard around the borrowed light. The communicating door may be an insertion between hall and kitchen passage as there is cracking of the plasterwork surrounding that is visible in the understair cupboard. The doorway itself is uneven and protrudes at the base, while being flush with the wall at the top. The worn stone step up from the kitchen passage has been repaired by a block of hard-wearing Pennant sandstone imported from out of the county (**fig.23**).

Old Kitchen/Sitting room

Plain ceiling with modern coving and skirtings. The walls are lined. Suspended carpeted floor. Good 2-panel door with wide planks and handle with blacksmith-wrought handles. Hung on substantial t-strap hinges, possibly a 17th century door reset from the earlier house (**fig.28**). Later door to present kitchen of narrow planks (**fig.31**). 3-light window with modern glazing and sill (**fig.29**).

²⁷ Personal communication



Fig.28 2-panelled door



Fig.29 Old kitchen/sitting room window

Present kitchen/larder

This was once one room with the present larder to the east. A 20th century stud wall now divides them, lined on the kitchen side with plasterboard. The ceiling appears to be original lath and plaster. There is a transverse beam with a rough chamfer (**fig.30**). All other surfaces are modern including the modern lino over a solid floor. Good 19th century door to the utility room/office. Modern 2-light window to west. A mark in the ceiling indicates the position of a fireplace across the south-west corner where the chimney breast passed through the ceiling. The brick flue is still externally visible.



Fig.30 Transverse beam

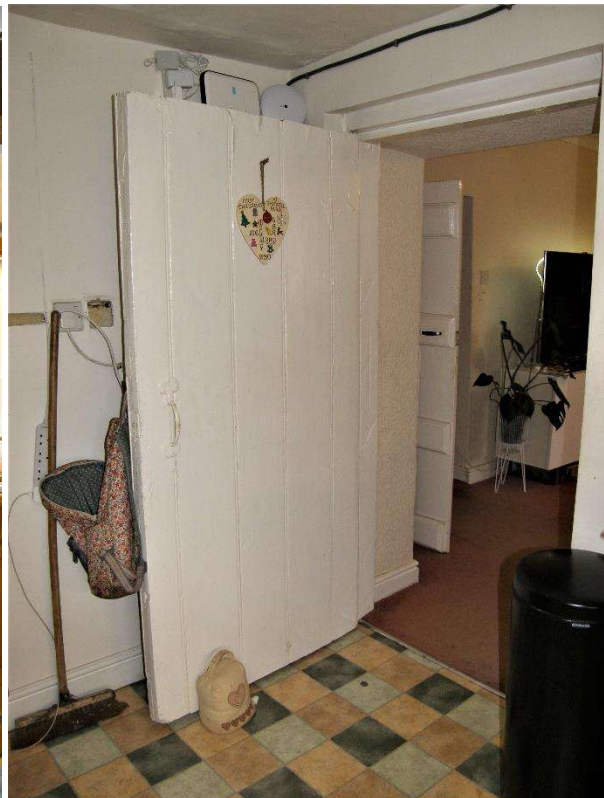


Fig.31 19th century planked door

On the other side of the partition is a 17th century beam with a small chamfer and ogee stops at the north end (**figs.32 & 33**). In the larder is a very good fitted 17th century cupboard made up of a small-panelled scratch moulded front with doors on cockshead hinges (**fig.35**). The sides of the cupboard are made up of staggered large boards. It is likely to be in its original position. On the south side is a former doorway now used as a cupboard with borrowed light over. The floor here is of square stone setts. Good 19th century planked door to front range.



Fig.32 Chamfered beam in larder



Fig.33 Ogee stop at north end of beam



Fig.34 Former doorway from larder to front range



Fig.35 17th century fitted cupboard

Utility/Bathroom

One step down from the kitchen/larder. This was also once one large room with the bathroom added as a dairy and cheese room between 1840-1886. Typically, it has its own separate enclosed stair rising to the cheese room. Plain ceiling with transverse beam additionally supported at the north end on an iron stanchion (**figs.36**). The walls are partly lined, but on the north wall are three deep holes for fixed furniture, perhaps a worktop. There is a 3-light window on the west side with modern glazing as above. On the north side is a similar window with modern glazing. Plain painted stone.

Beyond the modern stud partition is a bathroom lit by a 2 lights of the north window containing modern glazing (**fig.37**).



Fig.36 Dairy looking north



Fig.37 Bathroom

Former cheese room

At first floor level above the dairy is the former cheese-room, now a bedroom divided by modern partitions. At one time this room would have been filled with moveable shelves or 'rack and tack' to hold cheese rounds. The staircase is original (after 1840) with a modern softwood balustrade upstairs. It is lit from the east by a double casement, quite modern, and on the east by a high-set fixed light. There is no communication with the rest of the house.

On the south wall the face of a large 2-light moulded stone window has been exposed (**figs.38-40**). It has ogee moulding to the former exterior face into the present room, and plain chamfered on the inner side. This type of moulding on the mullion suggests a c1700 or earlier date. It has been blocked in with brick presumably after 1840 when the dairy was added. On the south side of the wall is timber lining to the room on the other side (**fig.40**). On the north side of the east bedroom is a two-light Crittal-type window.

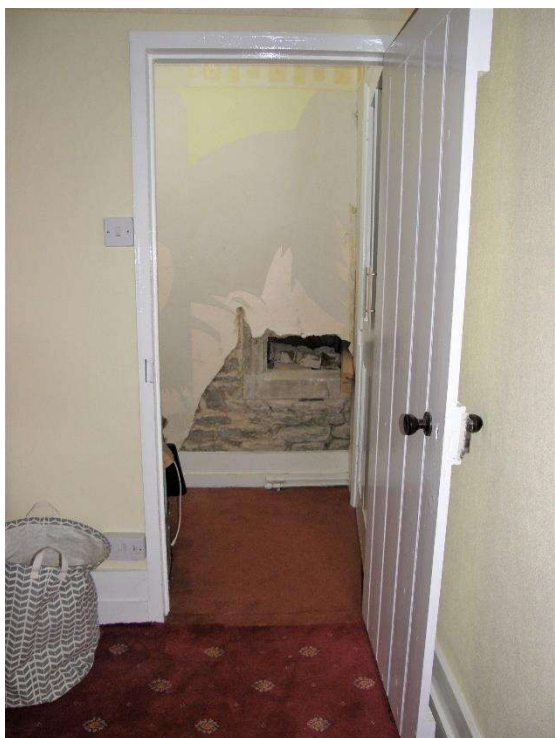


Fig.38 Formerly exterior north wall and window at rear of house before the addition of the dairy and cheese room

Fig.39 Detail of exposed window



Fig.40 Interior of window void showing chamfered side of mullioned frame

FIRST FLOOR

Bedroom 1

Plain ceiling with coving. Plain, possibly original skirting boards. Carpeted floor. On the south wall is a c1900 light painted timber surround with a plain mantel on a moulded bracket. There is a hob-grate inside the boarded opening (personal communication). 10x10 large sash, no horns. 6-panel door. Reeded-type architrave surround. Rear (west) wall has similar recess to room below which may suggest there was once a window in this position. Now partly filled in with a shelf. Good fitted cupboards of 6-panels. Probably later 19th century or early C20.



Fig.41 Possible blocked window on west wall



Fig.42 Blocked fireplace and built-in cupboards

Dressing room

Box room with elm floor as bedroom 2. 6 x 6 sash window. Borrowed light of 6 panes over door. Door of 6 panels.



Fig.43 Borrowed light to rear of first floor

Landing

Good arched borrowed light over corridor to rear of house (**fig.43**). The corridor continues in a dog-leg to bedroom 3.

Bedroom 2

Plain ceiling. All as above. Old elm floor, not carpeted (**fig.45**). Painted black at margins in c1900. Painted stone fireplace (**fig.44**). Plain chamfered surround. Hob grate inside. Older full-height fitted cupboards, prob late 19th century /early c20.



Fig.44 Painted stone fireplace with hob-grate



Fig.45 Bare elm boards

Cupboard

Old 6-panel door fitted to new frame. Possibly originally just continuation of corridor. Blocked doorway into 17th century wing with timber lintel over (fig.46). Blocked with concrete blocks. High ceiling the same height as landing. The onward corridor has a much lower ceiling height. Double doors of 3 panels each on south of corridor, 2 steps down. Elm floor. Now bathroom divided from corridor by vertical match-boarding.

Fig.46 Blocked doorway to the 17th century wing

Bedroom 3

Plain room with lath and plaster ceiling. Transverse beam with small chamfer (fig.48). Orig. boarded skirtings. Good wide original elm boards. 8x8 sash. The room was originally larger but part on the east side divided to form a box room, now an en-suite shower room and cupboard opposite (fig.47)





Fig.47 19th century division of original room



Fig.48 Plain beam dividing ceiling

Roof over main range

When the house was re-organised in c1830 it was re-roofed in shallow hardwood king-post trusses typical for the period (**fig.49**). There is one row of purlins cut back at the principal rafters. Access to the roof is from the first floor box room at the back of bedroom 2.



Fig.49 King post roof of 5 bays over main range

Roof over kitchen and larder/rear bedroom

Of sawn softwood. Interestingly, the timbers are whitewashed, suggesting that the roofspace was once open from the room below. The visible truss apex is haunched – a very typical feature of 18th century carpentry, as are the narrow curved collars that have a birds-mouth joint with the row of butt purlins (**figs.50 & 51**)



Figs.50 & 51 Roof over rear wing. Photos by Gary Bennett

Granary

The late C18 granary is situated near to the south end of the house. These were often placed within sight of the farmhouse as grain was a precious commodity. It is a small granary standing on 3 x 3 mushroom-shaped stone staddles, facing east (**figs.52**). The timber frame was originally clad with feather-edged elm boards, and has a half-hipped roof clad in double-Roman tiles, though it is likely to have been stone-tiled. The entrance is accessed by an ad hoc step arrangement of loose concrete blocks and timber baulks (**fig.53**). At the south-west corner one of the staddles may have sunk slightly (**fig.55**), though it is shown in the same position in 1986 when the granary was in good condition²⁸.

Much of the original elm weatherboarding has been replaced with narrower softwood boarding partly held in place by thin studs applied vertically across them and nailed in place. This is associated with the letting in of a window on the south elevation, which does not appear on photographs of July 1986. The underside of the granary appears to be intact, with narrow joists resting on a frame and transverse central beam (**fig.58**). Corrugated iron cladding to the lower part of the walls has been in place since at least 1986.



Fig.52 East elevation



Fig.53 Steps up to door

²⁸ See appendix B



Fig.54 South elevation



Fig.55 Sunk staddle in south-west corner

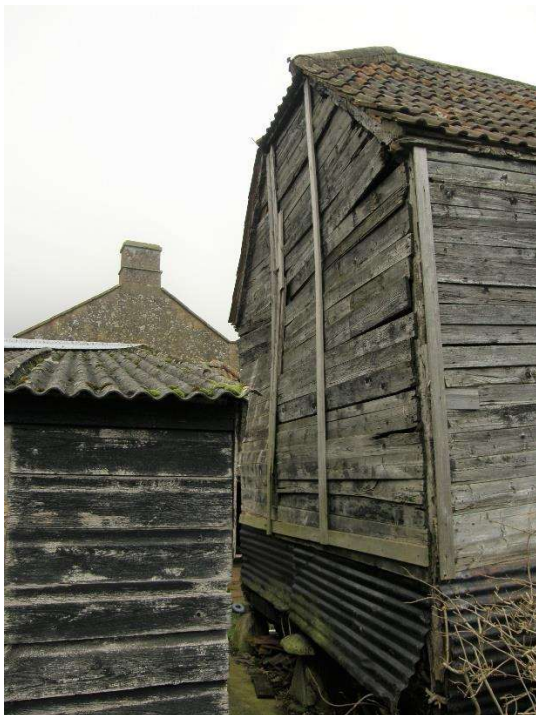


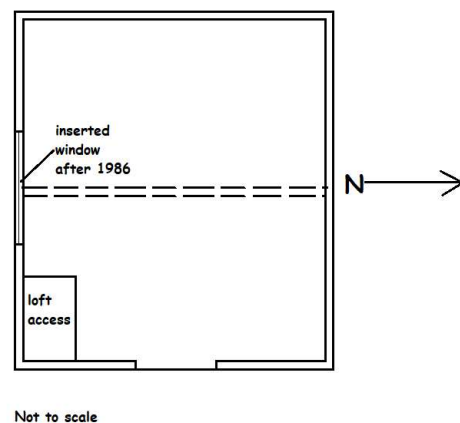
Fig.56 West elevation



Fig.57 North and west elevations



Fig.58 Underside of granary



Not to scale

Fig.59 Sketch plan of granary ground floor

The interior of the granary is also intact, though the sawn elm frame is rotted in parts due to water ingress. A deep and narrow transverse beam crosses the ceiling north to south carrying narrowly-spaced deep joists (**fig.61**). At either end the beam rests in a notch in the central post (**fig.61**). The interior was once also boarded and this has been partly replaced with corrugated iron. Construction is of sawn studs with long diagonal braces from each corner, typical of c1800. Part of the frame is resting on an acro-prop.

The loft was originally reached by a fixed loft ladder in the south-east corner, and some remains still cling to the frame (**fig.62**). The tops of the posts supporting the ties have shaped jowl posts (**fig.62**) Vertical boarding lining the walls still survive (**fig.63**). Sacks of grain would have been stored in the loft.



Fig.60 Interior with some remaining boarding on east wall



Fig.61 North end of beam resting on notch



Fig.62 Former position of ladder to loft over



Fig.63 Vertical board lining in loft

Other Outbuildings

The current farmyard is a courtyard arrangement reflecting a core of older, 18th century and earlier buildings. The house, nag stable and barn form the west, north and south sides respectively. The 19th century buildings are ranged on the outside of this courtyard, with a cowshed on the east side of the road. Some older buildings may have been replaced by the present wash house, pig sties and former cowshed on the west and east sides of the barn.

Forming the south side of the courtyard are a former earlier 19th century **wash house** of stone with a triple Roman tile roof (**fig.64**). Inside are the remains of a hearth formerly holding a wash copper. A former farmsteads survey of 1986 was informed that this small building was formerly also used as a bacon-smoking house, and at the time of the survey was being used as a farm office²⁹

²⁹ NWDC Community Programme survey of industrial buildings, 1986 held by WBR



Fig.64 Rear of wash house and brick building replacing two stone pigsties with yards

Adjoining the granary on the west side is a timber dairy with a corrugated iron roof, built after 1924 (**fig.65**). It is mentioned in the sale particulars of 1927. Interior not seen.



Fig.65 Dairy between 1924-7, south elevation

Adjoining to the east of the dairy is a former 8-bay stone with triple Roman tile-roofed cowshed altered during the earlier 20th century to a cart-horse stable (**fig.66**). On the Ordnance Survey mapping of 1886 it is shown as an open-fronted building. The stable fittings were added subsequently. The interior partitions are evidently later and the ceiling made up of a mixture of materials including metal rods (**fig.67**). The front of the stalls cuts across wall-cupboards at either end (**fig.68**) The roof has a typically 19th century king-post trusses.



Fig.66 Cart horse stable, south elevation

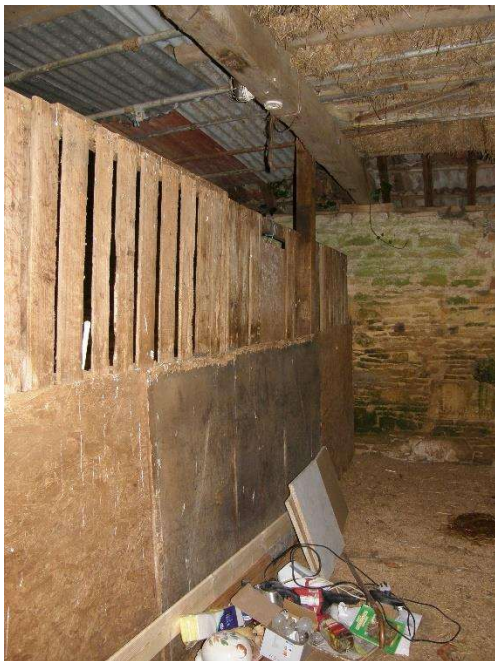


Fig.67 Interior partition

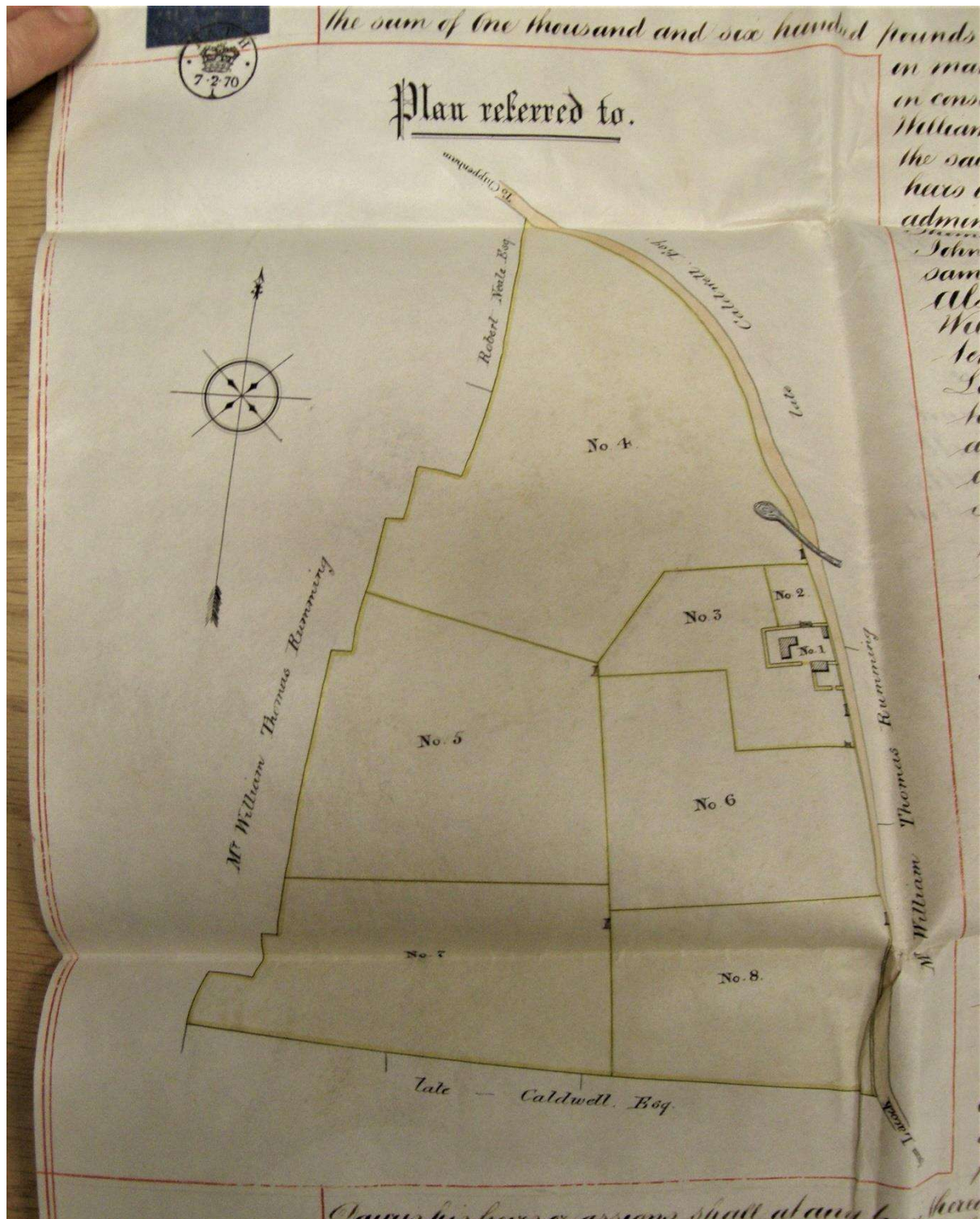


Fig.68 View west along open front

Appendix 1: Extract from Lacock tithe award, 1840, held at the Wiltshire & Swindon History Centre

Owner:	Occupier:	Plot no.	Description and size
RUMMING, Thomas	RUMMING, Thomas	609	Twelve Acres, Arable, 12-0-33, -.
RUMMING, Thomas	RUMMING, Thomas	610	Dry Shewell, Arable, 12-1-5, -.
RUMMING, Thomas	RUMMING, Thomas	611	Quar Ground, Arable, 8-3-10, -.
RUMMING, Thomas	RUMMING, Thomas	612	Eight Acres, Arable, 8-2-38, -.
RUMMING, Thomas	RUMMING, Thomas	613	Little Paddock, Pasture, 1-2-20, -.
RUMMING, Thomas	RUMMING, Thomas	614	Little Paddock, Pasture, 2-2-0, -.
RUMMING, Thomas	RUMMING, Thomas	615	Showel Farm House Yard etc, Homestead, 1-0-22, -.
RUMMING, Thomas	RUMMING, Thomas	616	Green Showel or Home Ground,
RUMMING, Sophia	CREW, John	shared plot 617	2 Tenements & Gardens, Garden etc, 0-1-8, -.
RUMMING, Sophia	HISCOCK, Thomas	shared plot 617	2 Tenements & Gardens, Garden etc, 0-1-8, -.
RUMMING, Thomas	RUMMING, Thomas	628	Bourne Mead, Pasture, 3-2-25, -.
RUMMING, Thomas	RUMMING, Thomas	634	Withy Bed, Withy, 0-0-34, -.
RUMMING, Thomas	RUMMING, Thomas	635	Old Womans Ground, Pasture, 10-3-25, -.
RUMMING, Thomas	RUMMING, Thomas	637	Fore Paddock or Skilling, Pasture, 2-3-25, -.
RUMMING, Thomas	RUMMING, Thomas	638	Lower Five Acres, Arable, 5-0-17, -.
RUMMING, Thomas	RUMMING, Thomas	639	Upper Five Acres, Arable, 9-2-19, -.
RUMMING, Thomas	RUMMING, Thomas	641	Popes Hill, Pasture, 9-1-29, -.
RUMMING, Thomas	RUMMING, Thomas	642	The Ten Acres, Pasture, 10-3-30, -.
RUMMING, Thomas	RUMMING, Thomas	643	Great Marsh, Pasture, 15-0-23, -.
RUMMING, Thomas	RUMMING, Thomas	647	Lots in Normead, Pasture, 7-1-36, -.
RUMMING, Thomas	RUMMING, Thomas	647a	Lots in Normead, Pasture, 3-0-0, -.

Appendix 2: Plan attached to Mortgage of 6th May 1870 held at Wiltshire & Swindon History Centre ref: 44/1/5



NORTH WILTS.

PARTICULARS OF SALE
OF A CAPITAL

FREEHOLD RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY.

TO BE SOLD BY AUCTION,
(Subject to such Conditions as will be then produced,) by

MR. CHARLES H. PARRY,

At the Angel Hotel, Chippenham, at Four o'clock in the Afternoon,
On FRIDAY the 1st day of June, 1877,
THE UNDERMENTIONED

PROPERTIES.

LOT 1.—AN EXCEEDINGLY DESIRABLE

FREEHOLD ESTATE,
(Except a small portion which is Copyhold of Inheritance of the Manor of Corsham, equal to Freehold,)
KNOWN AS

SHOWELL FARM
SITUATE IN THE
Parishes of LACOCK and CORSHAM, in the County of Wilts,
And within Two Miles of the important Market Town of Chippenham, and Station of the
Great Western Railway,
AND COMPRISING

A SUPERIOR FARM RESIDENCE,
Pleasantly situate in the Centre of the Estate, facing the beautifully Wooded Heights of Derry Hill, Bowood, and Bowden Hill,
and within easy reach of the best Meets of The Duke of Beaufort's Hounds, on the High Road, from Chippenham to Lacock,
WITH WELL-ARRANGED

HOMESTEAD and SUITABLE BUILDINGS.
The House may, at a small expense, be converted into a comfortable Hunting Box.

Also, **TWO LABOURERS' COTTAGES and GARDENS** near,
AND ABOUT

194 Acres of excellent Arable and Pasture Land.

LOT 2.—A VALUABLE

CLOSE OF PASTURE LAND,
ADJOINING LOT 1,
Situate in the Parish of CORSHAM, on the High Road from CHIPPENHAM to LACOCK and MELKSHAM,
Containing 12a. 3r. 17p. or thereabouts.

The Property may be viewed on application to the respective Tenants, and further particulars
may be obtained of the Auctioneer, at his Offices, Chippenham and Calne, of Messrs. BURNE
and PARKER, Solicitors, 1, Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, W.C. or of

Messrs. JACOB PHILLIPS & SON, Solicitors,
CHIPPENHAM.

PARTICULARS.

LOT 1.

ALL THAT COMPACT FARM

CALLED

SHOWELL FARM

Situate in the Parishes of Lacock and Corsham,

CONSISTING OF A

Comfortable and pleasantly situated Residence,

With Walled Garden, convenient Paddocks, well-arranged Homestead,
and suitable Buildings,

AND

170a. 3r. 19p. or thereabouts, of excellent Freehold Arable & Pasture Land

Situate in the Parish of Lacock, and

23a. Or. 25p. or thereabouts, of excellent Arable and Pasture Land,

WITH GOOD GROWING TIMBER,

Situate in the Parish of Corsham, and being Copyhold Inheritance of the Manor of Corsham, and which Tenure is considered equal to Freehold, as follows:—

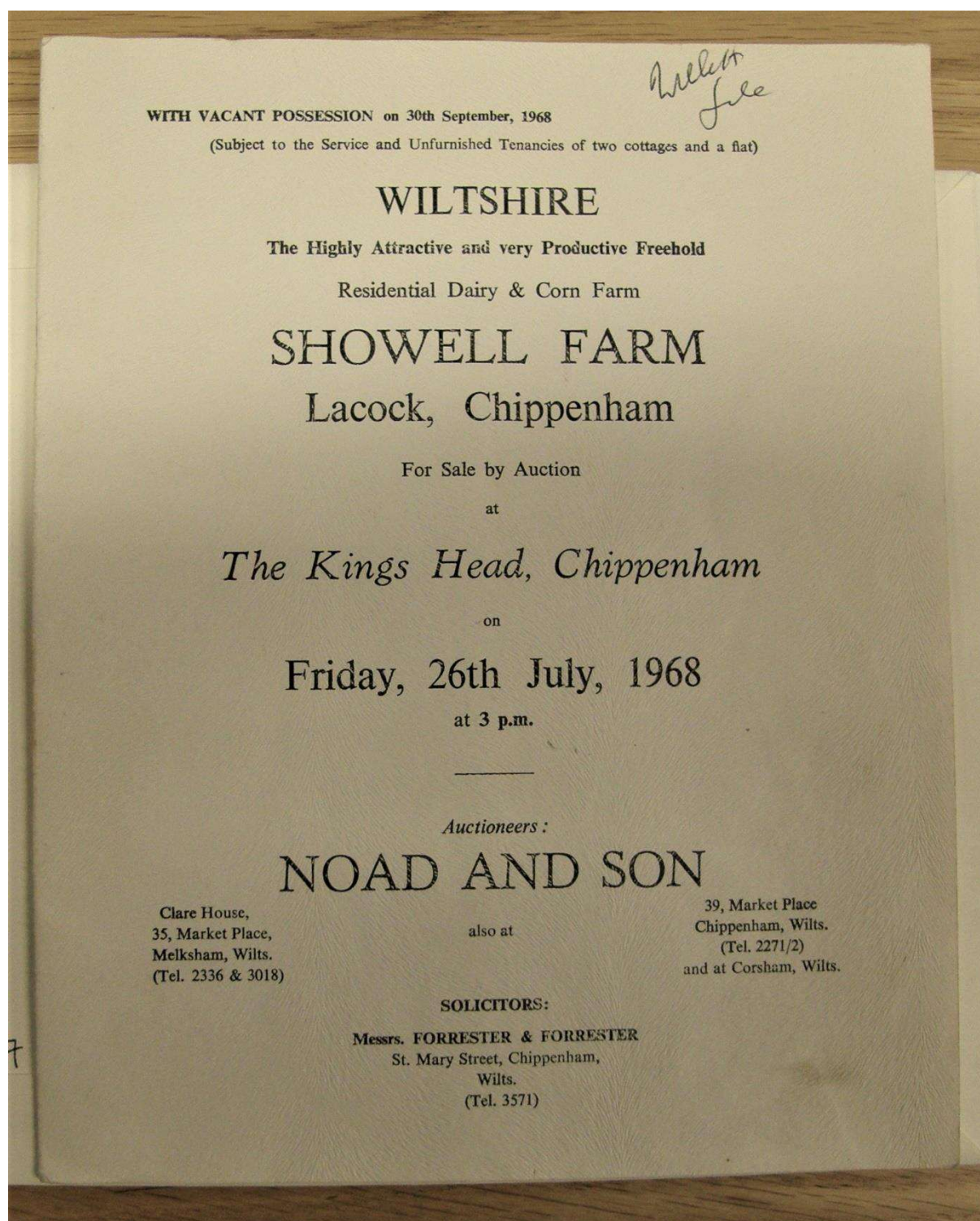
Nos. on the Plan.	DESCRIPTION.	STATE.	In Corsham Parish.			In Lacock Parish.			QUANTITY OF EACH FIELD.		
			QUANTITY.			QUANTITY.			A. R. P.		
			A.	R.	P.	A.	R.	P.	A.	R.	P.
1	Railway Ground	Arable	21	3	4						
1a	Ditto	Ditto				0	0	9	22	1	29
1b	Ditto	Ditto				0	2	16			
2	Upper and Lower Twelve Acres	Ditto				24	1	13	24	1	13
3	Quarry Ground	Ditto				8	3	34	8	3	34
4	Eight Acres	Ditto				8	2	26	8	2	26
5	Side Paddock	Pasture				1	1	17	1	1	17
6	Showell Farm House, Garden, Yards, and Buildings					1	1	32	1	1	32
7	Orchard	Pasture				0	2	22	0	2	22
8	Upper Paddock	Ditto				2	0	6	2	0	6
9	Green Showell	Ditto				21	0	10	22	1	31
9a	Ditto	Ditto	1	1	21						
10	Two Cottages and Gardens					0	1	13	0	1	13
11	Lower Paddock	Pasture				2	3	4	2	3	4
12	Skilling and Yard					0	0	23	0	0	23
13	Little Marsh	Pasture				3	1	33	3	1	33
14	Old Woman's Ground	Ditto				10	3	5	10	3	5
15	Upper and Lower Five Acres	Arable				10	1	11	10	1	11
16	Ten Acres	Pasture				9	3	30	9	3	30
17	Great Marsh	Ditto				14	3	22	14	3	22
18	Ash Bed	Plantation				0	0	38	0	0	38
19	Skilling Ground	Pasture				4	2	3	4	2	3
20	Dry Ground	Arable				23	2	0	23	2	0
21	Tillage Ground	Ditto				15	3	36	15	3	36
22	Great Marsh	Pasture				4	3	16	4	3	16
TOTAL ACRES			23	0	25	170	3	19	194	0	4

The Land is well Watered, in a high state of cultivation, and in a Ring Fence, and, from its position, forming a very desirable Estate either for Investment or occupation. The whole being now, and for many years, in the occupation of Mr. HENRY CANNON, as yearly Tenant, at the annual Rent of £400.

There is good Partridge Shooting over the Property.

The Estate adjoins Lands of The Marchioness Stapleton-Bretherton, W. H. Poynder, Esq. and others.

Appendix 4: Auction notice for Showell Farm, 26th July 1968: held at Wiltshire & Swindon History Centre ref: 1409/15/243



LOT 15

(Coloured Yellow on Plan).

SHOWELL FARM

(Illustration opposite Page 8.)

An Important and Valuable Dairy Farm

Situate on both sides of the Chippenham to Lacock and Melksham Road, and covering an area of about

273a. 3r. 9p.

The Farm is most conveniently placed under two miles from the Market Town of Chippenham, and is mainly in the Parish of Lacock, a small portion being under Corsham. There are long frontages to a good hard road.

The Property includes :

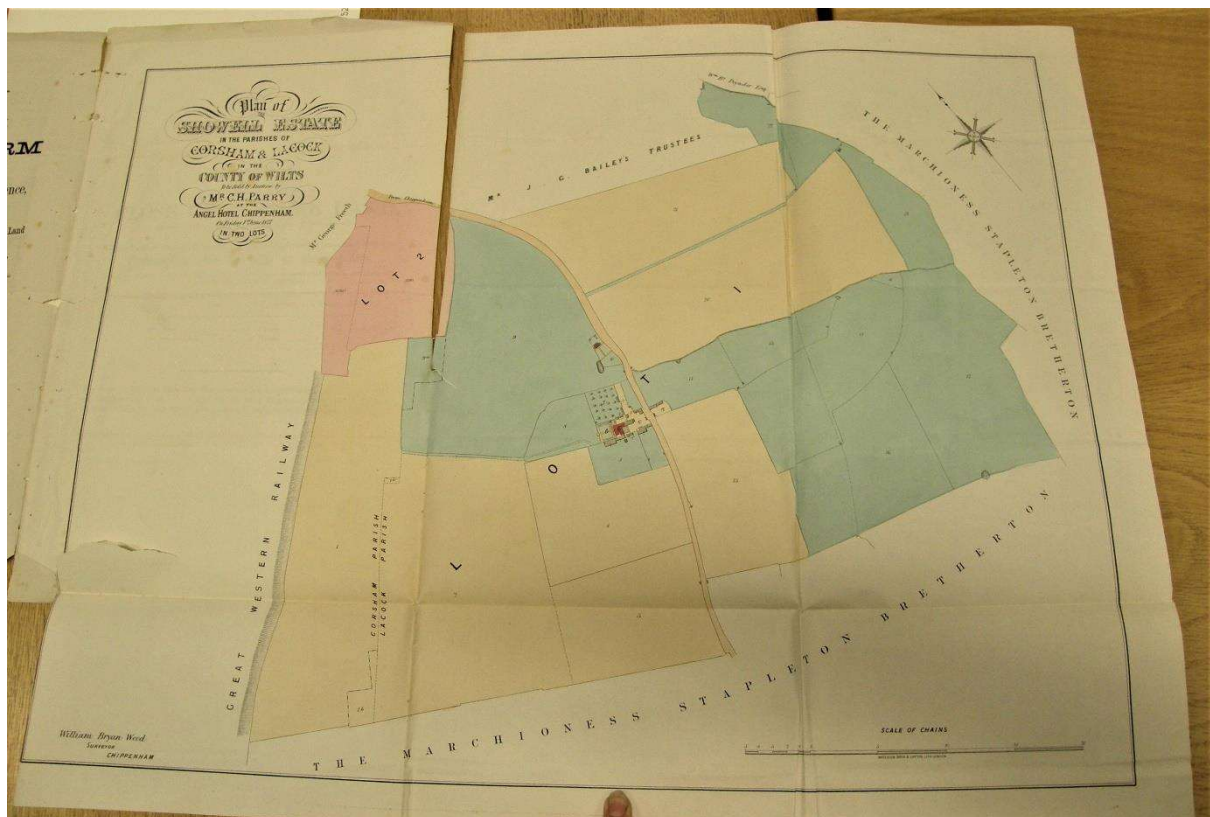
THE ATTRACTIVE AND SUBSTANTIAL FARMHOUSE

occupying a pleasant position easily approached from the road, and protected by the Front Garden with low wall and stone ornamented pilasters. The House is soundly constructed of brick with stone dressings and slated roof. It contains : Hall, large Drawing Room with grate, a similar sized Dining Room, Pantry, Old Kitchen with stone slab floor, Second Kitchen, Scullery with copper and hand pump to well, Bath Room and W.C. Outside Wood Shed. On the First Floor are Five good Bed Rooms and a Dressing Room. Deep Clothes Cupboard. Good Cellarage. There is a good walled-in Garden at rear.

The House is wired for Electric Light and in addition to the well, water is pumped to a tank from the reservoir near the Two Cottages on the North side which is fed from a spring.

THE FARM BUILDINGS

are conveniently situated and include : Stone and slate Two-stall Nag Stable, Harness Room, stone built Cart Horse Stable for seven with large Loft over, stone and slate Meal House, large stone and slab roofed Barn, stone and slate Trap House, stone and tiled Cow House for seven, timber and corrugated iron Dairy, a ditto Cow House for nine, Three Pigsties and a Fowl House, stone built Cow House for nine, Three timber and tiled Calving Pens, large steel and corrugated iron Dutch Barn, large substantially built and lofty stone and tiled DOUBLE COW HOUSE to tie up forty-nine with water laid to feeding troughs, well drained and in good order. Timber and stone Granary, Two other Pigsties, Four Calf Houses, Seven-bay stone and tiled range of Implement Sheds, Second large steel and corrugated iron Dutch Barn. On the opposite side of the road ranged round a stone walled yard are a stone built Tie-up for fifteen and a Calving Pen.



Appendix 5: Photographs taken by the Community Programme Survey of Industrial sites in North Wilts in 1986





