

**Avon House
Langley Park
Chippenham**

Heritage Impact Assessment

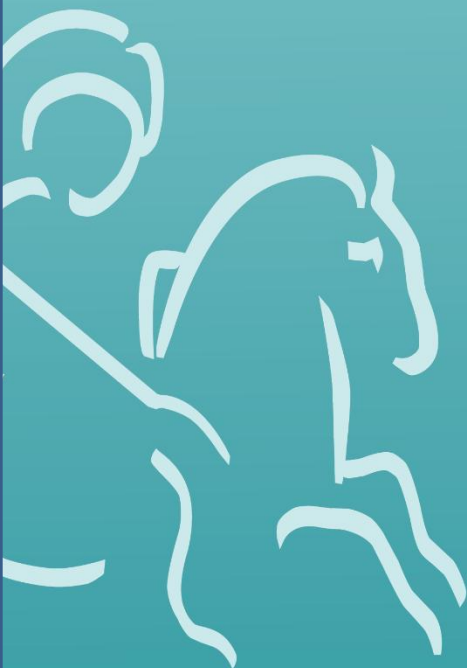


Report prepared for:
Northland PM

CA Project: CR2126

CA Report: CR2126_1

January 2026



Avon House Langley Park Chippenham

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date	January 2026
approved by	Richard Hardy IHBC, Senior Historic Buildings Consultant
signed	
date	January 2026
issue	1

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SUMMARY

Project Name: Avon House Heritage Impact Assessment

Location: Langley Park, Chippenham

NGR: ST 92633 74499

In December 2025 Cotswold Archaeology was commissioned by Northland PM to undertake a Heritage Impact Assessment to inform decision making with regards a proposed scheme of demolition in relation to modern extensions to the Grade II Listed Avon House and its associated barn in Langley Park, Chippenham. Avon House is a former rural farmhouse with origins in the late 17th/early 18th century which is now encircled by the buildings and hard landscaping of the industrial and commercial estates of Langley Park And Wavin UK. During the mid 20th century several extensions and new structures were added to the barn and principal house to increase their capacity as office space. None of the Avon House buildings are presently in use.

The farmhouse, barn and 20th century extensions have been placed in their historic context and described in proportionate detail to inform the assessment. It has been concluded that both the extensions attached to the Listed Building and the substantial erosion of its setting (associated both with the loss of the wider rural landscape and modern development in the immediate setting) detracts from its special interest which is found to be modest and largely informed by evidential and historic values implied within the Building's envelope and fabric.

The assessment has concluded that the demolition of the modern structures attached to and within the setting of the Listed Building brings no harm and in fact comprises an enhancement to its significance and experience through the reinstatement of a portion of green garden area to the Listed Building and the removal of elements which detract from its evidential, aesthetic and historic value. As such, the proposals comply with the statutory duties under Section 66 of the Planning Act 1990 and local and national policy.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. In December 2025, Cotswold Archaeology was commissioned by Northland PM to undertake a Heritage Impact Assessment in respect of a programme of demolition works at the Grade II Listed Avon House, Langley Park, Chippenham (Fig.1, NGR ST 92633 74499); hereafter the 'Building'. The Building is a former late 17th or early 18th century farmhouse with late 20th century extensions. An historic barn is located c. 10m south-west of the farmhouse and is currently subsumed within the attached extensions. It is located within a large business park on the eastern outskirts of Chippenham. It lies adjacent to Cocklebury Lane and is accessed via Langley Park Way (through the business park).
- 1.2. The proposed development comprises the removal of late 20th century additions to the farmhouse, thereby reinstating the historic form and appearance of the Listed Building and reinstating the historic barn as a standalone structure (albeit heavily altered). This assessment will examine the Building and its history in proportionate detail to inform an understanding of its development and significance. This will in turn inform an assessment of the effects of the proposed scheme on its significance. The buildings proposed for demolition are attached to the Listed Building and are therefore considered part of it for the purposes of Listed Building Consent.
- 1.3. Avon House does not lie within or near a Conservation Area, and there is one Listed Building (Pew Hill House) which is located to the north-west, but is screened from intervisibility to the farmhouse by intervening built form. Given this, and a lack of any historic, functional or experiential links between the two buildings, no settings or Conservation Area assessment has been undertaken.

Objectives and professional standards

- 1.4. Cotswold Archaeology is a Registered Organisation with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA). This report has been prepared in accordance with appropriate standards and guidance, including the 'Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment' (Historic England 2015), further clarifies that a desk-based assessment should:

'...determine, as far as is reasonably possible from existing records, the nature, extent and significance of the historic environment within a specified area, and the impact of the proposed development on the significance of the

historic environment, or will identify the need for further evaluation' (Historic England 2015, 3).

Statute, policy and guidance context

- 1.5. The Site is located in the local authority of Wiltshire Council. The local development plan is the Wiltshire Core Strategy adopted in 2015. A Local Plan Review is in train but is not a material consideration at this stage.
- 1.6. This assessment has been undertaken within the key statute, policy and guidance context presented within Table 1.1. The applicable provisions contained within these statute, policy and guidance documents are referred to, and discussed, as relevant, throughout the text. Fuller detail is provided in Appendix 1.

Statute	Description
National Heritage Act 1983 (amended 2002)	One of four Acts of Parliament providing for the protection and management of the historic environment, including the establishment of the Historic Monuments & Buildings Commission, now Historic England.
Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act (1990)	Act of Parliament placing a duty upon the Local Planning Authority (or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State) to afford due consideration to the preservation of Listed Buildings and their settings (under Section 66(1)), and Conservation Areas (under Section 72(2)), in determining planning applications.
National Planning Practice Guidance (updated July 2019)	Guidance supporting the National Planning Policy Framework.
National Planning Policy Framework (2024)	Provides the English government's national planning policies and describes how these are expected to be applied within the planning system. Heritage is subject of Chapter 16 (page 59).
Wiltshire Local Plan 2015	Comprises the local development plan (local plan), as required to be compiled, published and maintained by the local authority, consistent with the requirements of the NPPF (2024). Intended to be the primary planning policy document against which planning proposals within that local authority jurisdiction are assessed. Where the development plan is found to be inadequate, primacy reverts to the NPPF (2024).
Conservation Principles (Historic England 2008)	Guidance for assessing heritage significance, with reference to contributing heritage values, in particular: <i>evidential</i> (archaeological), <i>historical</i> (illustrative and associative), <i>aesthetic</i> , and <i>communal</i> .
Good Practice Advice in Planning: Note 2 (GPA2): Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (Historic England, 2015)	Provides useful information on assessing the significance of heritage assets, using appropriate expertise, historic environment records, recording and furthering understanding, neglect and unauthorised works, marketing and design and distinctiveness.

Statute	Description
Good Practice Advice in Planning: Note 3 (GPA3): The Setting of Heritage Assets, Second Edition (Historic England, 2017)	Provides guidance on managing change within the settings of heritage assets, including archaeological remains and historic buildings, sites, areas, and landscapes.

Table 1.1 Key statute, policy and guidance



- Site location
- Site boundary

0 1:10,000 200m

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Ordnance Survey AC0000808122



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PROJECT TITLE

Avon House, Langley Park, Chippenham
HIA

FIGURE TITLE

Site location plan

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FIGURE NO.

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2. METHODOLOGY

Data collection, analysis and presentation

- 2.1. This assessment has been informed by a proportionate level of information sufficient to understand the significance of the Listed Building and the impacts of the proposals on its significance. The information which informs the assessment has been collated from a variety of online documentary sources including the Wiltshire & Swindon Historic Environment Record and Historic England data.
- 2.2. A site visit was also undertaken as part of this assessment. The primary objectives of the site visit were to examine the Building and its context, including its setting. The wider landscape was examined, as relevant, from accessible public rights of way.

Assessment of heritage significance

- 2.3. The significance of known and potential heritage assets which may be affected by the proposed development, has been assessed and described, in accordance with paragraph 207 of the NPPF (2024), the guidance issued by ClfA (2020), Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2 (Historic England 2015), and Advice Note 12: Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets (Historic England 2019).
- 2.4. Determination of significance has been undertaken according to the industry-standard guidance on assessing heritage value provided within Conservation Principles (English Heritage 2008). This approach considers heritage significance to derive from a combination of discrete heritage values, principal amongst which are: i) evidential (archaeological) value, ii) historic (illustrative and associative) value, iii) aesthetic value, iv) communal value, amongst others. Further detail of this approach, including the detailed definition of those aforementioned values, as set out, and advocated, by Historic England, is provided in Appendix 1 of this report.

Assessment of potential development effects (benefit and harm)

- 2.5. The present report sets out, in detail, the ways in which identified susceptible heritage assets might be affected by the proposals, as well as the anticipated extent of any such effects.
- 2.6. Identified effects upon heritage assets have been defined within broad 'level of effect' categories (Table 2.1). These are consistent with key national heritage policy and guidance terminology, particularly that of the NPPF (2024). This has been done in

order to improve the intelligibility of the assessment results for purposes of quick reference and ready comprehension. These broad determinations of level of effect should be viewed within the context of the qualifying discussions of significance and impact presented in this report.

- 2.7. It should be noted that the overall effect of development proposals upon designated heritage assets are judged, bearing in mind both any specific harms or benefits (an approach consistent with the Court of Appeal judgement *Palmer v. Herefordshire Council & ANR* Neutral Citation Number [2016] EWCA Civ 1061).

Level of effect	Description	Applicable statute & policy
Heritage benefit	The proposals would better enhance or reveal the heritage significance of the heritage asset.	Enhancing or better revealing the significance of a heritage asset is a desirable development outcome in respect of heritage. It is consistent with key policy and guidance, including the NPPF paragraphs 203 and 219.
No harm	The proposals would preserve the significance of the heritage asset.	Preserving a Listed building and its setting is consistent with s66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act (1990). Sustaining the significance of a heritage asset is consistent with paragraph 203 of the NPPF, and should be at the core of any material local planning policies in respect of heritage.
Less than substantial harm (lower end)	The proposals would be anticipated to result in a restricted level of harm to the significance of the heritage asset, such that the asset's contributing heritage values would be largely preserved.	In determining an application, this level of harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposals, as per paragraph 215 of the NPPF.
Less than substantial harm (upper end)	The proposals would lead to a notable level of harm to the significance of the heritage asset. A reduced, but appreciable, degree of its heritage significance would remain.	Proposals involving change to a Listed building or its setting, or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses, or change to the character or appearance of Conservation Areas, must also be considered within the context of Sections 7, 66(1) and 72(2) of the 1990 Act. <i>The provisions of the Act do not apply to the setting of Conservation Areas.</i>
Substantial harm	The proposals would very much reduce the heritage asset's significance or vitiate that significance altogether.	Paragraphs 212 - 215 of the NPPF would apply. Sections 7, 66(1) and 72(2) of the Planning Act (1990), and the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act (1979), may also apply.

Table 2.1 Summary of level of effect categories (benefit and harm) referred to in this report in relation to heritage assets, and the applicable statute and policy.

Limitations of the assessment

- 2.8. This assessment is principally a desk-based study, and has utilised secondary information derived from a variety of sources, only some of which have been directly examined for the purpose of this assessment. The assumption is made that this data, as well as that derived from secondary sources, is reasonably accurate.
- 2.9. Due to their poor structural condition as a result of failed roof coverings it was not possible to access the modern flat roof extensions attached to the Listed Building and only external photography was possible.

3. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Townscape context

- 3.1. Avon House is located in Langley Park, which is a large commercial business estate located on the north-west side of Chippenham in Wiltshire. The estate, which covers some 7 hectares, is formed of large commercial and light industrial buildings surrounded by car parking and access roads. To the north-west of Langley Park is a business estate housing Wavin Ltd which is accessed via Parsonage Way. Cocklebury Lane, an historic route, subdivides the Wavin site from Langley Park (Fig.1). Together they form a dense commercial and business district of Chippenham.
- 3.2. Avon House lies adjacent to Cocklebury Lane in the northern section of Langley Park. It is surrounded by a small area of green space with mature trees, and beyond this lies the built structures and hard landscaping of the commercial business estate. The GWR railway line from Bristol to London runs c. 250m south of the Building. South of the rail line is a series of field parcels associated with Rawlings Farm, otherwise the Building is surrounded on all sides by modern 20th century commercial development.

Historic context

- 3.3. Avon House lies in the parish of Langley Burrell Without, with Langley Burrell being a small rural village to the north-west of Chippenham. The south-west portion of the parish is characterised by its proximity to Chippenham, with land sloping gently towards the River Avon. Historically, this area contained smaller hamlets and farmsteads, and it was notable for its agricultural use, particularly arable fields and meadows. In later periods, this part of the parish was overtaken by industrial and suburban Chippenham. The south-west area of the parish also saw the influence of transport links, as roads and later the railway shaped settlement patterns and economic activity.
- 3.4. Langley Burrell was established in the medieval period as a rural settlement focussed on local farming activity. It is noted in the draft Victoria County History publication¹ for the parish as being notable for having an active population of Baptist and Primitive Methodists and a number of 18th and 19th century non-conformist chapels.
- 3.5. The earliest available mapping which depicts Avon House is the 1848 Tithe Map (Fig. 2). The farmhouse and barn are present on the plan. The main house is broadly L

¹ <https://www.history.ac.uk/sites/default/files/9%20LANGLEY%20BURRELL.pdf>

shaped in planform oriented north-east to south-west. The map records an outshot to the east from the north-east corner of the range oriented north-west to south-east. The barn appears to have a threshing barn with two central lateral outshot wings or porches in a typical threshing porch arrangement. A third building (not extant) is located to the north of the main house. The Tithe apportionment details that a John Nicholls both owns and occupies the farmstead (plot 740 labelled Farm Homestead) alongside several field parcels in the vicinity, including an orchard (plot 741). The field parcels are all noted as pasture which accords with the local predominance for dairy herds and cheese production.



Fig. 2 The 1848 Tithe map

- 3.6. The 1st Edition Ordnance Survey (OS) map of 1886 (Fig. 3) depicts the farmhouse in broadly the same planform as seen in 1848, though a thin linear range has been added to the south elevation as it junctions with the south-east wing, this is known to be a lean-to structure. The barn to the west has changed slightly with the loss of the southern central wing and the extension of the northern half of the northern elevation. The Building in the north corner of the plot has also been removed. The house has been labelled as Avon House, which suggests that perhaps its farming use had ceased.

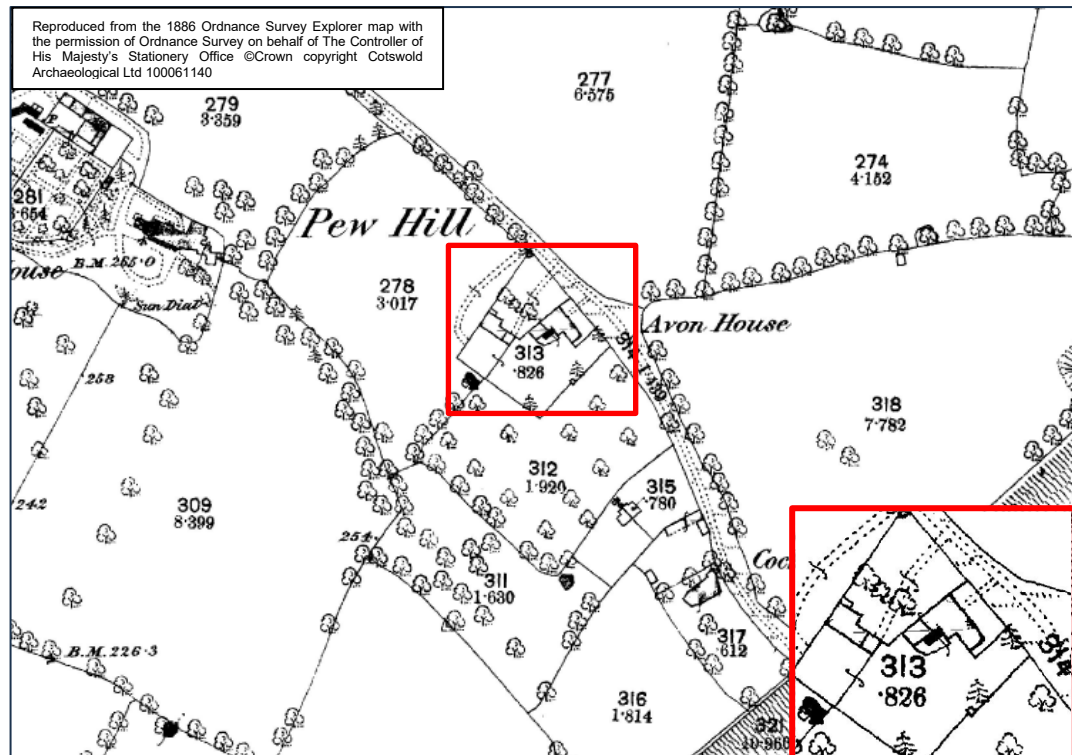


Fig. 3 The 1886 Ordnance Survey map

- 3.7. Local (unverified) online information² suggests that by 1890 the Building was home to Henry Jenner Scobell and his wife Mildred with four servants. Scobell served with the Royal Scots Greys in the Boer Wars. This household, alongside the Avon House name, would suggest that the farming function had ceased and the house had become a good status country home for an upper middle-class couple. Similarly in the 1901 census the occupants of the house are noted as Banks Robinson Grieg and his family. Grieg was also in the military.
- 3.8. The 1932 OS map (Fig. 4) depicts little change to the Building or its environs except for the addition of a glass house to the west of the main house. It is clear that the orchard to the south is still extant and that the immediate environs of the Building are still wholly rural bar the main railway line c. 250m to the south. Within the wider area, early 20th century suburban development extending from the historic core of Chippenham is present c.750m to the west.

² <https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=10159682478368857&set=gm.1363338354232696&id=vanity=254552581777951>

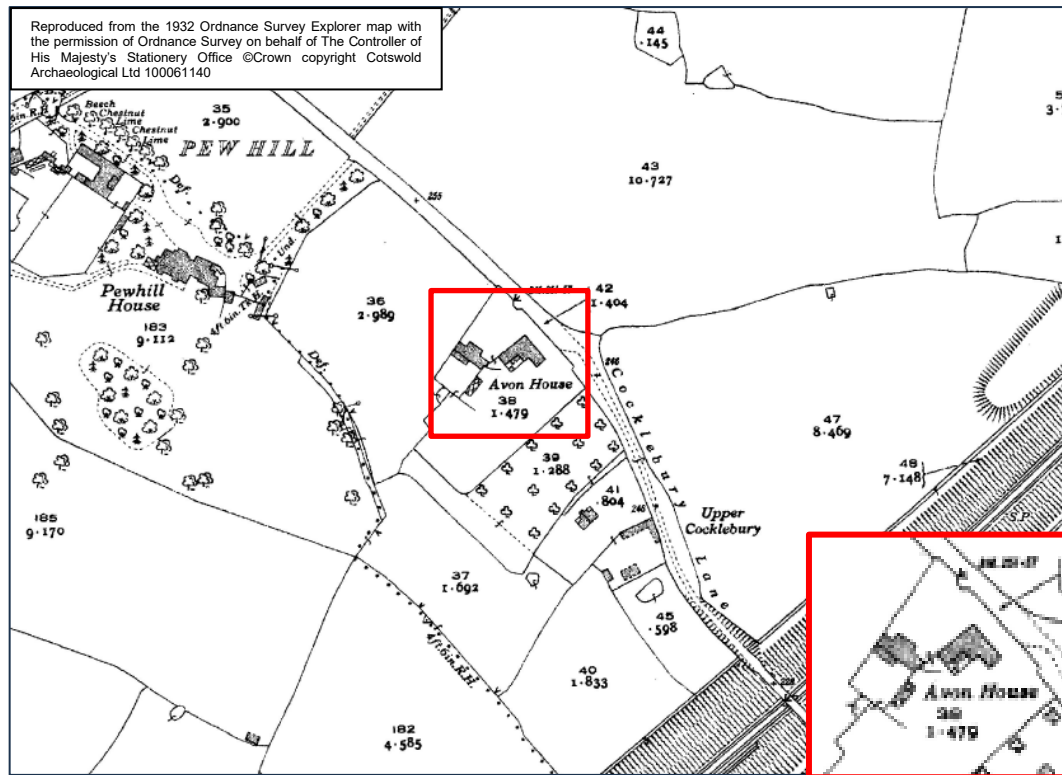


Fig. 4 The 1932 Ordnance Survey map

- 3.9. Between 1932 – 1977 a great deal of change occurred to the environs of the Building with the establishment of Langley Park and the overall urbanisation of the setting of the Listed Building as an extension of the historic industrial quarter around Chippenham's railway station to the west. The built environment included both light industrial works and warehouses/offices as depicted in the 1991 OS map (Fig. 5) as well as areas of hardstanding for vehicle parking.
- 3.10. During the mid 20th century the Building was extended significantly as seen and annotated in Fig. 7. It was in use as offices at the time of listing in 1978 and a local interest online site suggests it was occupied by the Westinghouse Signal and Mining Development Department. It has remained in use as offices until the early 20th century and now lies vacant.

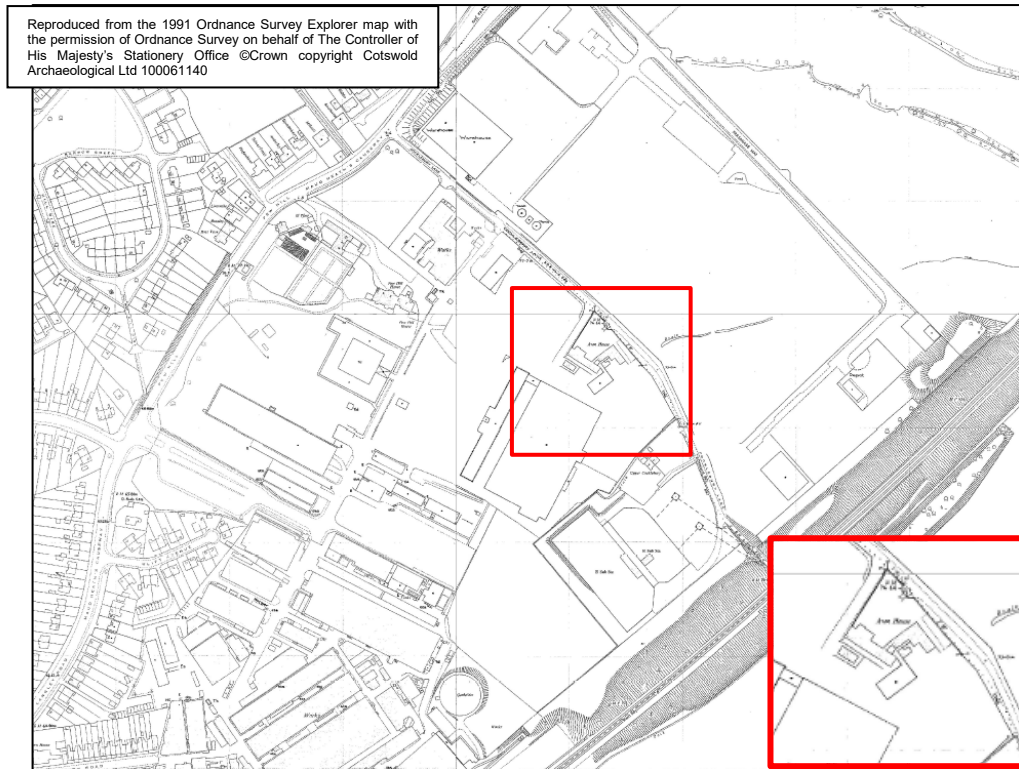


Fig. 5 The 1991 Ordnance Survey map

3.11. Fig. 6 provides an aerial overview of the Building in its current context.

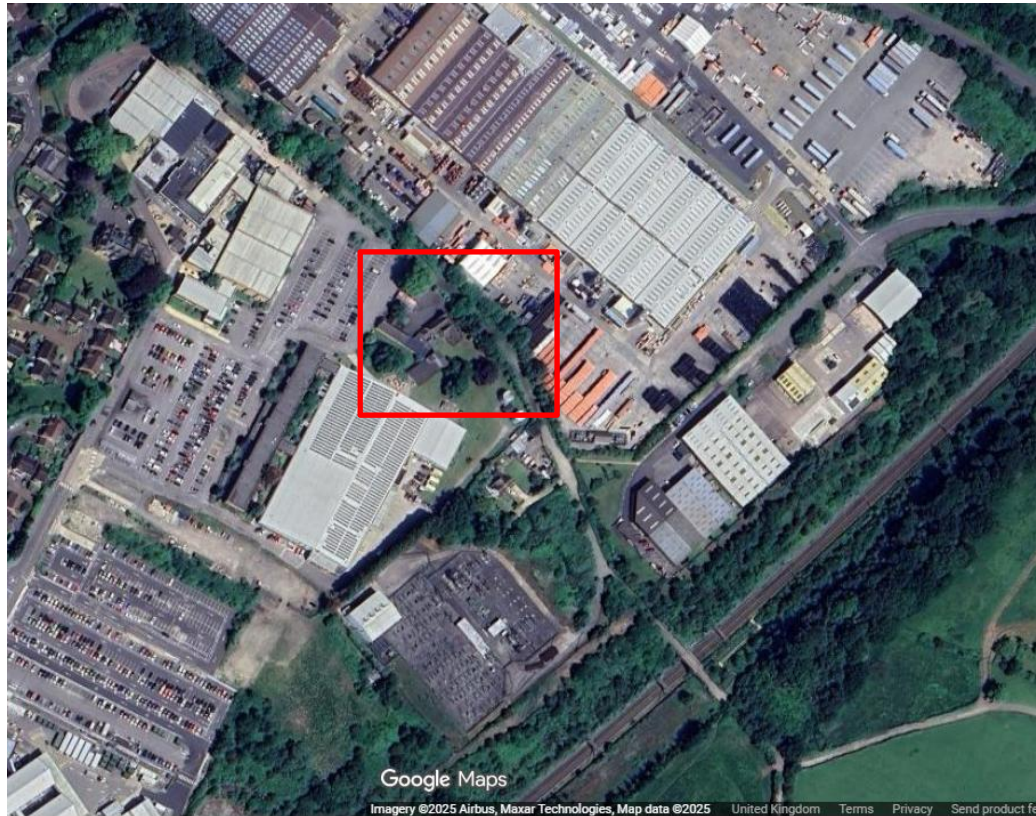
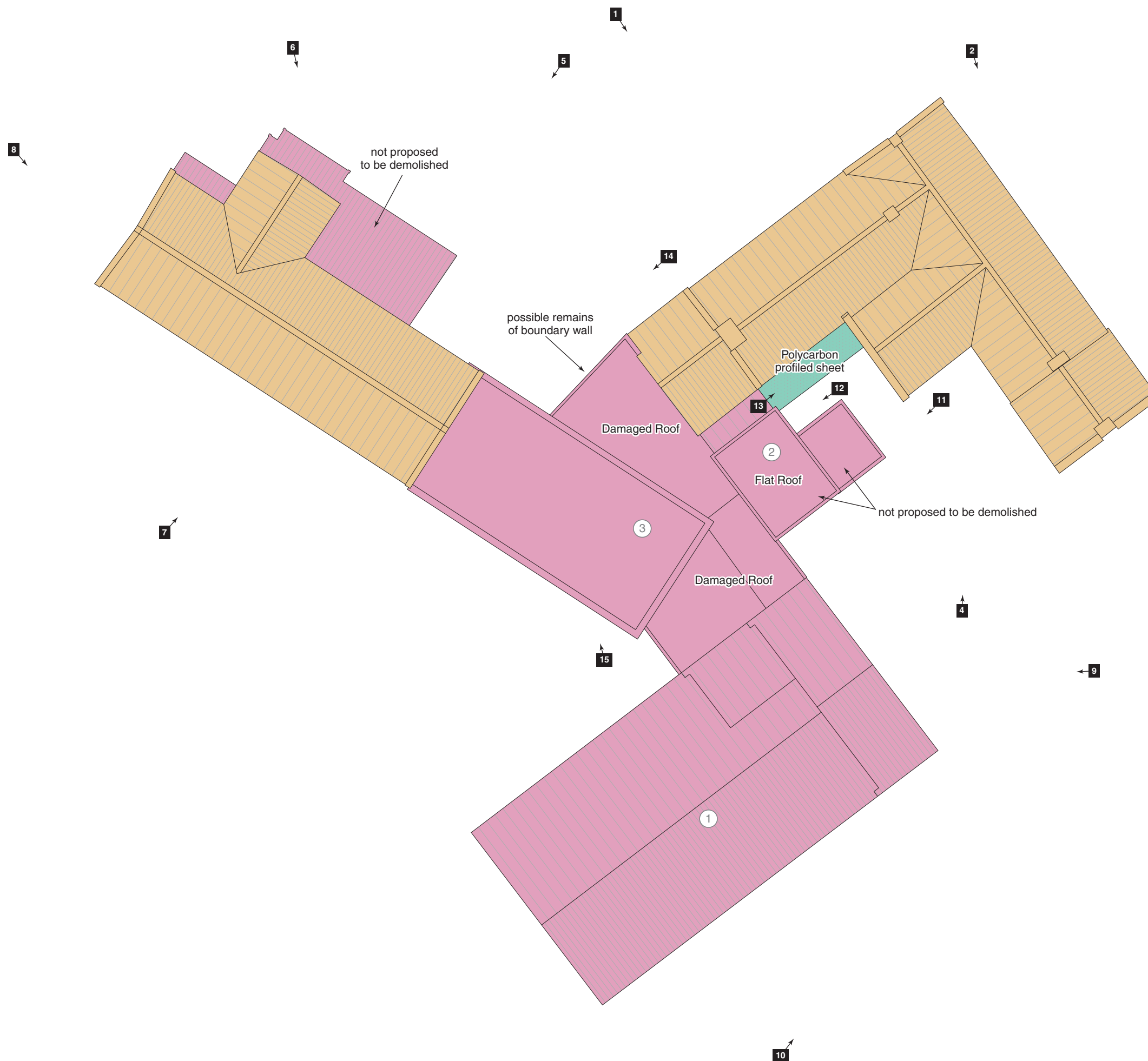


Fig. 6 The Building in its current context (copyright Google Earth)



-  Historic building present on Tithe Map (1848)
-  Late 19th century feature altered in mid 20th century
-  Mid-late 20th century extensions and additions
-  Extension number
-  Direction of photograph

0 1:200 10m

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PROJECT TITLE
Avon House, Langley Park, Chippenham HIA

FIGURE TITLE
Roof plan with photograph locations

DRAWN BY CHECKED BY PM	HMM DJB SH	PROJECT NO. DATE SCALE@A3	CR2126 15/01/2026 1:200	FIGURE NO. 7
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4. BUILDING ASSESSMENT

Introduction

4.1. As identified in the map regression in Section 4, the Listed Building was initially a rural farmhouse, becoming a private country dwelling house in the mid to late 19th century. During the mid 20th century, substantial development within the environs of the Building to create a commercial business and light industrial park meant that the Building fell out of residential use and became offices. It has lain empty and unused for a number of years.

4.2. To simplify descriptions the elevations are referred to as follows:

- The north-west elevation is the north elevation
- The north-east elevation is the east elevation
- The south-east elevation is the south elevation
- The south-west elevation is the west elevation

4.3. The Building is considered to be late 17th century in date and the Listing Description is as following:

Farmhouse, now offices. Late C17/early C18. Coursed limestone rubble with freestone quoins, rendered to the front; concrete tiled roof with stone coping and moulded ashlar stacks to 4 gable ends. L-shaped plan with rear right service wing. EXTERIOR: 2 storeys; 4-window range. The range to the left is lower with cyma-moulded stone mullions and hoodmoulds to 3-light stone-mullioned windows with C20 casements (2-light to the left return). The main block has plain stone-mullioned windows to the 1st floor, 3-light to the left and two 2-light to the right, with a datestone "B.E.E.1701" to the left. The central doorway has a stone cyma-moulded architrave flanked by C20 4-light bay windows with concrete pent roofs. The right return has 2- and 3-light windows with C20 glazing, those to the 1st-floor right with mullions. INTERIOR: not inspected but noted as having been altered.

The principal house

4.4. The Building was built in coursed local rubblestone with quoins in an L plan formation with a rear (south) service wing, but with modern additions to the west elevation, these include an older lean-to structure and a flat roof building which links to a modern extension of the former barn. The exterior stone work has been subject to cementitious re-pointing, which is resulting in much spalling of the stone. Render has

been applied to the east and southern elevations but the date stone '1701' is uncovered on the east (former front) elevation. There is evidence within the external elevations of extension and alteration to the Building. The roofs, which are of a pitched and gabled formation, have modern (20th century) cementitious roof tiles.

- 4.5. There is a mixture of original and 20th century window insertions, the original being of a moulded stone mullion 3 light or 2 light composition, some with hoodmoulds and the later being timber casements set in plainer dressed stone window openings. All have 20th century metal window casements within the openings. The north elevation (Photo 1) features several windows of both historic and later appearance, including a large ground floor multipane window in the western section of the elevation. Evidence of possible alteration is evident in the presence of irregular quoins beneath the drainpipe perhaps indicating the east-wing wing was a later addition. A one storey addition with catslide roof is appended to the west elevation, This is present on historic mapping and potentially represents an early service range such as a dairy or similar as it is not rendered as a residential part of the dwelling in the Tithe Map of 1848 (Fig. 2).



Photo 1 The north elevation

- 4.6. In the east elevation (Photo 2) there are two 20th century bay windows flanking the front door to the former front (east) elevation which faces Cocklebury Lane (now not accessible from Langley Park). This was the principal entrance when the Building was accessed from the roadway. The elevation has been rendered with quoins exposed and features historic window openings of differing periods; this is evidenced by the slight differences in mouldings to the stone dressings. It is possible that 20th century works to the Building included the removal of the hoodmoulds to the principal section. To the southern end is a distinctly lower and different building section with hood moulded mullion windows apertures; this may be the original structure which was then extended in phases during the 18th and 19th centuries, or it may have been an historic lower status outshot of the north-south range. The hoodmoulds would suggest the former.



Photo 2 **The east elevation**

- 4.7. The south elevation on the eastern range (Photo 3) comprises the gable end of the Building, again with hood moulded two light windows. This leads to the west facing section of the north-south range which features several windows of different sizes and dressings, indicating phases of alteration including some modern repair with piecing in of fresh stone (Photo 4). The south facing elevation of the east-west wing features what appears to be a projecting hearth which has been capped (Photo 4).

-
- 4.8. Photo 4 also depicts the late 19th century glazed lean to which sits within the corner of the transverse ranges. This has been modernised in the 20th century with timber multipane fenestration and a corrugated plastic roof. It appears to have a cement blockwork plinth. As can be seen in the photo, the eastern section of the east-west range is a reduced depth to the rest of the range. This is best understood on viewing the extant planform (Fig. 7).



Photo 3 The south gable



Photo 4 The western facing elements of the north-south range (lean-to arrowed)

- 4.9. Internally the Building has been converted to offices, which has resulted in subdivision in some rooms to create kitchens and toilet facilities, though some historic plan form is still legible. Suspended ceilings formed of ceiling tiles, in some case two layers, were seen in the larger, presumably office, rooms. The conversion has resulted in the covering over or removal of many internal features of note, though the historic staircase and some inbuilt cupboards (including two arched head niches) and window seat panelling were observed, though these had a 19th century character suggesting earlier phases of refurbishment and alteration. Most of the doors are modern fire doors, and as described above, the windows have Critall style metal inserts, probably from the early 20th century. The only area which retains a visible original character is the attic space which has not been subject to conversion and has exposed hand cut timber beams forming the roof trusses, timber floorboards and historic wall surfaces.

The barn

- 4.10. The barn adjacent and to the east of the main house (Photo 5) is depicted in the Tithe Map as an opposing door threshing barn, By the 1st Edition OS map (Fig. 3) its western door and porch had been removed. The eastern porch is still extant but is

now barely legible, as depicted in Photo 6. The barn has been extended to meet the link building extending from Avon House, this flat roof extension is in an extremely poor state of repair (see following section on modern extensions). The main barn building has also been extended on its east side with a timber clad one storey lean to structure, which has effectively subsumed the protruding gabled porch. It has also been reroofed in cement roof tiles.

- 4.11. Within the west elevation wide new windows have been inserted along the length of the Building as part of its conversion to offices (Photo 7). Brick and stonework arches over blocked openings and other scars within the elevations show how the Building has been altered over time, this includes blocking of the high hayloft door with moulded stone dressings on the northern gable (Photo 8). Internally the former barn has been subject to a complete strip out and conversion to offices such that no historic plan form or fabric is visible or interpretable at all.



Photo 5 The barn seen looking to the west from near the north elevation of the main house



Photo 6 **The former barn with additions over the former threshing porch (arrowed)**



Photo 7 **The rear (west) of the barn range**



Photo 8 **The northern gable of the former barn**

The mid-20th century extensions

- 4.12. Figure 7 provides a roof plan depicting the historic sections of the buildings on site, alongside photo location points. The mid 20th century extensions are labelled as Extension 1 – 3. They were all constructed between 1936 and 1977 as evidenced by mapping. Their likely date of construction is between the 1950s and 1970, according to their appearance.
- 4.13. Extension 1 is a functional part one and part two storey buff brick office building as depicted in Photos 9 and 10. It has no aesthetic or historic value and holds no heritage significance.



Photo 9 **Extension 1 seen looking to the west**



Photo 10 **The south elevation of Extension 1**

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- 4.14. Extension 2 is a single storey building which appears to be a plant room and has recently been refurbished. It is attached to both Extension 1 and the principal Listed Building (Photo 11 and Fig. 7). This is not proposed to be demolished.



Photo 11 Extension 2 seen from a first-floor window

- 4.15. Extension 3 comprises one storey flat roofed structures which interlink Extension 1 and the farmhouse and barn. These are best understood on Figure 7 and annotated/shaded on Photo 12. Also annotated on Photo 12 is the older lean-to with corrugated plastic roof. Photo 13 depicts the interior of this lean-to which clearly shows the original elevation of the farmhouse within the lean-to with a mullioned window.



Photo 12 Image of roofscape depicting Extension 3



Photo 13 Interior of the lean-to to removed

- 4.16. Photo 14 depicts the interface between the north elevation of the historic Building and part of Extension 3. This includes a stone clad flat roofed building which abuts the Listed Building featuring a panelled door with concrete lintel. Despite the vernacular stone masonry this structure is not present on the 1936 OS map (Fig. 4) and is only partially present in the 1977 – 1989 mapping as a thin linear structure with courtyard to the rear. Quoins delineate the extent of the farmhouse and its junction with this section of rubblestone walling. It may represent the remains of a boundary wall attached to the farmhouse and then re-used as the façade of a new structure in the mid 20th century. As it is no longer readable as a boundary wall, and heavily altered, is not considered to hold any meaningful evidential or historic value. The internal area was not accessed internally due to safety concerns.
- 4.17. Photo 15 depicts the rear (west) elevation of Extension 3 as it interfaces with the barn building.



Photo 14 View of the north elevation (west section) with stone-built masonry structure arrowed)



Photo 15 **The west elevation of Extension 3 abutting the south gable of the barn**

The current setting and its contribution to the Building

- 4.18. The Building lies sandwiched between Langley Park and the Wavin business/industrial park to its east on Parsonage Way. The immediate and wider surroundings of the Building comprise hard landscaped car parks and modern business and light industrial buildings, including Chippenham Power Station. There is a grassed area to the south and east of the Building, but this 'reads' as communal open spaces rather than as any type of garden or farmstead holding. The Great Western Railway line runs just south of boundary of Langley Park. High metal barrier fencing blocks both access or clear views of Cocklebury Lane; the former laneway accessing the farmstead.
- 4.19. Those aspects of the setting of the Building which contributed to its special historic interest are totally lost and/or severed, these include its rural setting, its natural orientation towards and connection to Cocklebury Lane, its farmstead layout and any type of farmyard or farm courtyard. The Building is not interpretable or legible as former farmhouse and this is further exacerbated by wholesale conversion of the barn which has resulted in a complete loss of its intelligibility as a former farm building.

The setting of the Building therefore results in a substantial erosion of the significance of the Listed Building as a result of the largely unrelated and unintelligible environment in which it is now situated.

Statement of Significance

Historic value

- 4.20. The Listed Building retains a limited measure of historic value in terms of physical form and fabric which offers illustrative information on its function and role as a farmhouse then dwelling house. Unfortunately, this information is limited by the loss of the authentic setting of the Listed Building and the alterations and extensions it has undergone during the 20th century which has resulted in the loss and obscuring of visual and archaeological information from which to understand and appreciate it. Documentary evidence provides some limited information on historic occupiers of the Building, but these associations are not notable in a national context. As such, whilst historic value is present, it is considered to be modest in scale.

Evidential value

- 4.21. The archaeological information inherent in the fabric and form of the Building itself makes the most meaningful contribution to the significance of the Listed Building. Whilst the Building has been converted to offices, the conversion appears to have been relatively light touch, though key historic features such as fireplaces have been removed. However the basic historic planform, structural building envelope and associated masonry and timber fabric has survived largely intact, including principal timbers in the roof trusses, and offers detailed information on the phases of change to the Building and local historic building techniques and craftsmanship.
- 4.22. In the barn, evidential information has been more acutely lost or obscured by the wholesale conversion and alteration of the structure from a functional farm building into a suite of offices, meaning both planform and fabric have been severely affected. This has reduced the contribution that evidential value makes to the overall significance of this element of the Listed Building.

Aesthetic value

- 4.23. There is patina of antiquity and a rustic vernacular character to the historic elevations of the Listed Building which infers a modest level of aesthetic value on it. It appears to be of several historic phases all of which are visible on the masonry elevations and which retain information from to understand the history and development of the

Building. The level of aesthetic value is relatively modest given there appears to be no inherent architectural design intent however it is generally a characterful building in the Wiltshire historic rural farmhouse vernacular. Its aesthetic value as a whole building composition is certainly diminished by the addition of the 20th century functional extensions which partly obscures elevations of the Building and erodes an overall appreciation of its historic appearance as a single, un-extended entity. The loss of almost all its authentic setting also effects how the Building is experienced in terms of its sensory aesthetic qualities.

Summary

- 4.24. The change that has occurred to both the Listed Building and more acutely its setting has negatively impacted on its significance and somewhat eroded its special interest. As such, it holds only a modest level of significance as a building of special architectural and historic interest.

5. THE EFFECTS OF THE PROPOSALS

- 5.1. The proposals comprise the removal of the mid 20th century extensions to the Listed Buildings as illustrated in Figure 8. Those elements to be demolished are also illustrated in Fig. 7 and are all structures created in the mid-20th century, likely in the 1950s or 60s. All removal and making good of junctions with the principal Listed Building are to be undertaken in a sensitive manner, with any repairs and reinstatement to be undertaken with care in appropriate traditional materials (see Reinstatement and Repair methodology details in the Design and Access Statement (PRC 2026). It is anticipated that details of repairs to the Listed Building (where it is affected by the removal of structures) could be conditioned if considered necessary.

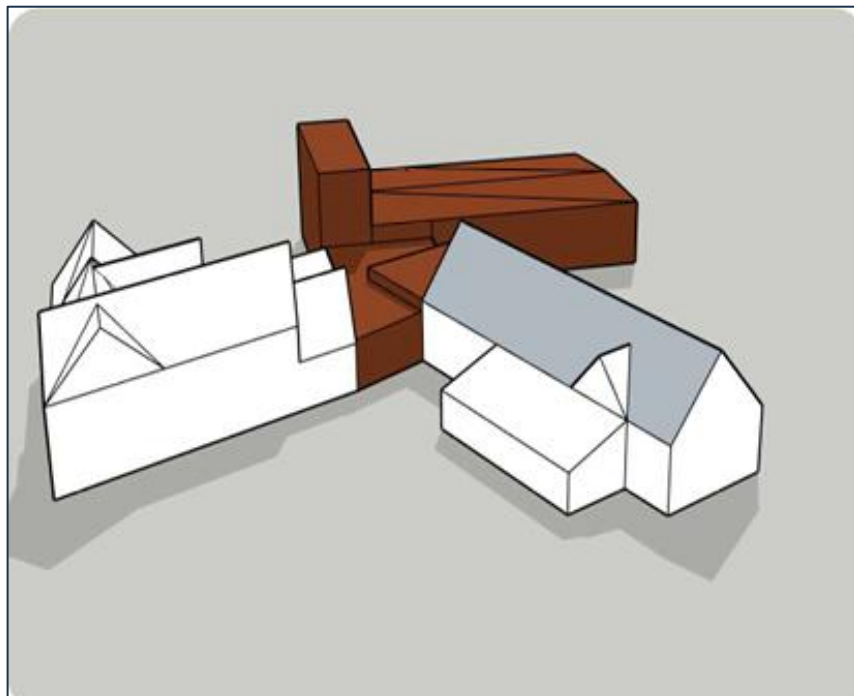


Fig. 8 Structures to be demolished detailed in brown

- 5.2. The demolition scheme will include the removal of floor slab and foundations of the modern extensions and it is proposed to level the ground surface and seed with grass to reinstate a lawn to this area. Whilst not fully indicative of a farmstead, the restoration of a green, undeveloped setting to this area of the Building's environs will provide an improvement on the understanding and appreciation of the Listed Building as an historic building within a garden plot.
- 5.3. The proposals will remove modern extensions to the Listed Building which have no inherent heritage value and which currently undermine and obscure the significance

of the principal Building through both their physical attachment to it and obscurement of it and their harmful effect on the character and experience of its setting. As such, their removal will enhance the significance of the Listed Building through better revealing its historic form and appearance and partially restoring its immediate garden setting. As such, the proposals comply with the statutory duties under Section 66 of the Planning Act 1990 and local and national policy.

6. CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1. This assessment has been produced in order to inform decision making with regards a proposed scheme of demolition in relation to modern extensions to the Grade II Listed Avon House and its associated barn in Langley Park, Chippenham. Avon House is a former rural farmhouse with origins in the 17th century which is now encircled by the buildings and hard landscaping of the industrial and commercial estates of Langley Park And Wavin UK. In the mid 20th century several extensions and new structures were added to the barn and principal house to increase their capacity as office space. None of the buildings are presently in use.
- 6.2. The farmhouse, barn and 20th century extensions have been described in proportionate detail to inform the assessment. It has been concluded that both the extensions attached to the Listed Building and the loss of setting to it (associated both with the wider loss of rural landscape and modern development in the immediate setting) detracts from its special interest which is found to be modest and largely informed by evidential and historic values implied within the Building's envelope and fabric.
- 6.3. The assessment has concluded that the demolition of the modern structures attached to and within the setting of the Listed Building brings no harmful impact and in fact an enhancement to its significance and experience through the reinstatement of a portion of green garden area to the Listed Building and the removal of elements which detract from its evidential, aesthetic and historic value. As such, the proposals comply with the statutory duties under Section 66 of the Planning Act 1990 and local and national policy.

7. REFERENCES

Historic England 2008 *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment*

Historic England 2015 *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment*

Historic England 2017 *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (Second Edition)*

Historic England 2019 *Historic England Advice Note 12: Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets*

Historic England 2024 *National Heritage List for England* <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing /the-list/>

Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government 2024 *National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)*; published December 2024

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 Act of UK Parliament

Cartographic sources were viewed at Promap and the Genealogist

Online sources

<https://www.history.ac.uk/sites/default/files/9%20LANGLEY%20BURRELL.pdf>

https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=10159682478368857&set=gm.1363338354232696&id_orvanity=254552581777951

APPENDIX 1: HERITAGE STATUTE POLICY & GUIDANCE

Heritage Statute: Listed Buildings

Listed buildings are buildings of 'special architectural or historic interest' and are subject to the provisions of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 ('the Act'). Under Section 7 of the Act 'no person shall execute or cause to be executed any works for the demolition of a listed building or for its alteration or extension in any manner which would affect its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest, unless the works are authorised.' Such works are authorised under Listed Building Consent. Under Section 66 of the Act '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 special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any feature of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses'.

Note on the extent of a Listed Building

Under Section 1(5) of the Act, a structure may be deemed part of a Listed Building if it is:

- (a) fixed to the building, or
- (b) within the curtilage of the building, which, although not fixed to the building, forms part of the land and has done so since before 1st July 1948

The inclusion of a structure deemed to be within the 'curtilage' of a building thus means that it is subject to the same statutory controls as the principal Listed Building. Inclusion within this duty is not, however, an automatic indicator of 'heritage significance' both as defined within the NPPF (2024) and within Conservation Principles (see Section 2 above). In such cases, the significance of the structure needs to be assessed both in its own right and in the contribution it makes to the significance and character of the principal Listed Building. The practical effect of the inclusion in the listing of ancillary structures is limited by the requirement that Listed Building Consent is only needed for works to the 'Listed Building' (to include the building in the list and all the ancillary items) where they affect the special character of the Listed building as a whole.

Guidance is provided by Historic England on 'Listed Buildings and Curtilage: Historic England Advice Note 10' (Historic England 2018).

National heritage policy: the National Planning Policy Framework

Heritage assets and heritage significance

Heritage assets comprise 'a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its

heritage interest' (the NPPF (2024), Annex 2). Designated heritage assets include World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, Protected Wreck Sites, Registered Parks and Gardens, Registered Battlefields and Conservation Areas (designated under the relevant legislation; NPPF (2024), Annex 2). The NPPF (2024), Annex 2, states that the significance of a heritage asset may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Historic England's 'Conservation Principles' looks at significance as a series of 'values' which include 'evidential', 'historical', 'aesthetic' and 'communal'.

The setting of heritage assets

The 'setting' of a heritage asset comprises 'the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral' (NPPF (2024), Annex 2). Thus it is important to note that 'setting' is not a heritage asset: it may contribute to the value of a heritage asset.

Guidance on assessing the effects of change upon the setting and significance of heritage assets is provided in 'Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets', which has been utilised for the present assessment (see below).

Levels of information to support planning applications

Paragraph 207 of the NPPF (2024) identifies that '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'.

Designated heritage assets

Paragraph 202 of the NPPF (2024) explains that heritage assets 'are an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance'. Paragraph 212 notes that 'when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance'. Paragraph 213 goes on to note that 'substantial harm to or loss of a grade II listed building...should be exceptional and substantial harm to or loss of designated heritage assets of the highest significance (notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites,

registered battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites)...should be wholly exceptional’.

Paragraph 215 clarifies that ‘Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use’.

Wiltshire Development Plan

Core Strategy Core Policy 58

Ensuring the conservation of the historic environment

Development should protect, conserve and where possible enhance the historic environment. Designated heritage assets and their settings will be conserved, and where appropriate enhanced in a manner appropriate to their significance, including:

- i. nationally significant archaeological remains
- ii. World Heritage Sites within and adjacent to Wiltshire
- iii. buildings and structures of special architectural or historic interest
- iv. the special character or appearance of conservation areas
- v. historic parks and gardens
- vi. important landscapes, including registered battlefields and townscapes.

Distinctive elements of Wiltshire’s historic environment, including non-designated heritage assets, which contribute to a sense of local character and identity will be conserved, and where possible enhanced. The potential contribution of these heritage assets towards wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits will also be utilised where this can be delivered in a sensitive and appropriate manner in accordance with Core Policy 57 (Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping). Heritage assets at risk will be monitored and development proposals that improve their condition will be encouraged. The advice of statutory and local consultees will be sought in consideration of such applications.

Good Practice Advice 1-3

Historic England has issued three Good Practice Advice notes (‘GPA1-3’) which support the NPPF. The GPAs note that they do not constitute a statement of Government policy, nor do they seek to prescribe a single methodology: their purpose is to assist local authorities, planners, heritage consultants, and other stakeholders in the implementation of policy set out in the NPPF. This report has been produced in the context of this advice, particularly ‘GPA2 –

Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment’ and ‘GPA3 – The Setting of Heritage Assets’.

GPA2 - Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment

GPA2 sets out the requirement for assessing ‘heritage significance’ as part of the application process. Paragraph 8 notes ‘understanding the nature of the significance is important to understanding the need for and best means of conservation.’ This includes assessing the extent and level of significance, including the contribution made by its ‘setting’ (see GPA3 below). GPA2 notes that ‘a desk-based assessment will determine, as far as is reasonably possible from existing records, the nature, extent and significance of the historic environment within a specified area, and the impact of the proposed development on the significance of the historic environment, or will identify the need for further evaluation to do so’ (Page 3).

GPA3 – The Setting of Heritage Assets

The NPPF (Annex 2: Glossary) defines the setting of a heritage asset as ‘the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced...’. Step 1 of the settings assessment requires heritage assets which may be affected by development to be identified. Historic England notes that for the purposes of Step 1 this process will comprise heritage assets ‘where that experience is capable of being affected by a proposed development (in any way)...’.

Step 2 of the settings process ‘assess[es] the degree to which these settings and views make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s) or allow significance to be appreciated’, with regard to its physical surrounds; relationship with its surroundings and patterns of use; experiential effects such as noises or smells; and the way views allow the significance of the asset to be appreciated. Step 3 requires ‘assessing the effect of the proposed development on the significance of the asset(s)’ – specifically to ‘assess the effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful, on the significance or on the ability to appreciate it’, with regard to the location and siting of the development, its form and appearance, its permanence, and wider effects.

Step 4 of GPA3 provides commentary on ‘ways to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm’. It notes (Paragraph 37) that ‘Maximum advantage can be secured if any effects on the significance of a heritage asset arising from development liable to affect its setting are considered from the project’s inception.’ It goes on to note (Paragraph 39) that ‘good design may reduce or remove the harm, or provide enhancement’.

Heritage significance

Discussion of heritage significance within this assessment report makes reference to several key documents. With regard to Listed buildings and Conservation Areas it primarily discusses ‘architectural and historic interest’, which comprises the special interest for which they are designated.

The NPPF provides a definition of ‘significance’ for heritage policy (Annex 2). This states that heritage significance comprises ‘The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic’. This also clarifies that for World Heritage Sites ‘the cultural value described within each site’s Statement of Outstanding Universal Value forms part of its significance’.

Regarding ‘levels’ of significance the NPPF (2024) provides a distinction between: designated heritage assets of the highest significance; designated heritage assets not of the highest significance; and non-designated heritage assets.

Historic England’s ‘Conservation Principles’ expresses ‘heritage significance’ as comprising a combination of one or more of: evidential value; historical value; aesthetic value; and communal value:

- Evidential value – the elements of a historic asset that can provide evidence about past human activity, including physical remains, historic fabric, documentary/pictorial records. This evidence can provide information on the origin of the asset, what it was used for, and how it changed over time.
- Historical value (illustrative) – how a historic asset may illustrate its past life, including changing uses of the asset over time.
- Historical value (associative) – how a historic asset may be associated with a notable family, person, event, or moment, including changing uses of the asset over time.
- Aesthetic value – the way in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a historic asset. This may include its form, external appearance, and its setting, and may change over time.
- Communal value – the meaning of a historic asset to the people who relate to it. This may be a collective experience, or a memory, and can be commemorative or symbolic to individuals or groups, such as memorable events, attitudes, and periods of history. This includes social values, which relates to the role of the historic asset as a place of social interactive, distinctiveness, coherence, economic, or spiritual / religious value.

Effects upon heritage assets

Heritage benefit

The NPPF clarifies that change in the setting of heritage assets may lead to heritage benefit. Paragraph 219 of the NPPF (2024) notes that ‘Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably’.

GPA3 notes that ‘good design may reduce or remove the harm, or provide enhancement’ (Paragraph 28). Historic England’s ‘Conservation Principles’ states that ‘Change to a significant place is inevitable, if only as a result of the passage of time, but can be neutral or beneficial in its effects on heritage values. It is only harmful if (and to the extent that) significance is reduced’ (Paragraph 84).

Specific heritage benefits may be presented through activities such as repair or restoration, as set out in Conservation Principles.

Heritage harm to designated heritage assets

The NPPF (2024) does not define what constitutes ‘substantial harm’. The High Court of Justice does provide a definition of this level of harm, as set out by Mr Justice Jay in *Bedford Borough Council v SoS for CLG and Nuon UK Ltd*. Paragraph 25 clarifies that, with regard to ‘substantial harm’: ‘Plainly in the context of physical harm, this would apply in the case of demolition or destruction, being a case of total loss. It would also apply to a case of serious damage to the structure of the building. In the context of non-physical or indirect harm, the yardstick was effectively the same. One was looking for an impact which would have such a serious impact on the significance of the asset that its significance was either vitiated altogether or very much reduced’.

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