

**SOUTHVIEW FARM
Dursley Lane
TROWBRIDGE
Wiltshire**

HERITAGE STATEMENT

Prepared on behalf of

COULSTON ESTATES

By

Michael Heaton MifA IHBC

Reference: MH3714-3v3

May 2023



SOUTHVIEW FARM
Dursley Lane, Trowbridge
Wiltshire

Heritage Statement

May 2023

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Brief

- 1.1.1 This document presents an assessment of the significance of buildings at Southview Farm in Dursley Lane at the southeastern edge of Trowbridge in Wiltshire, and the likely affect on that significance of a proposed commercial and residential development. It is subsequent to a comprehensive archaeological and historical assessment of the buildings and their surroundings¹, with which it should be read, augmented by an inspection of the building's material fabric and updated to align with current planning policy. It identifies the affective policy matrix; the significance of the buildings and their setting; and the likely affect of development on that significance.
- 1.1.2 The assessment has been prepared by Michael Heaton MifA IHBC - an archaeologist and building historian – in accordance with the published guidance of *Historic England*², the *Chartered Institute for Archaeologists*³, the *Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers*⁴ and Section 16 of the *National Planning Policy Framework*. It is not a narrative history, but an assessment of the significance of the building and its setting based on received history and the professional guidance cites above.
- 1.1.3 Methodologically, the assessment is guided by the professional standards of historical building assessment promoted jointly by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists and the Institute for Historic Building Conservation⁵, which require that studies such as this present an assessment of the likely effect of the proposed works on the significance of affected heritage assets⁶. As that guidance conflicts with current Historic England guidance, which stipulates that assessment of impact should be undertaken only by the LPA's officers, Section 4.3 of this report is intended as guidance, not a definitive conclusion binding on curatorial officers. The following pages and illustrations explain the methods and criteria used; summarise the site's geographical, historical and statutory context; present relevant primary historical data, and describe the layout, structure and fabric of the structure; and concludes with an assessment of the structure's significance and importance and the likely effect of the proposals on that significance and importance.

¹ Heaton, 2016

² English Heritage, 2006; English Heritage, 2001; English Heritage, 2011; English Heritage 2008, *Historic England* 2015. .

³ Institute for Archaeologists, 2008.

⁴ ALGAO, 1997.

⁵ IEMA, 2021-09-17

⁶ ALGAO, 1994, para 1.5; CifA, 2017, p2 'Standard'

1.2 Site

- 1.2.1 Dursley Lane is the southern end of a residential thoroughfare that runs NW-SE through southeast Trowbridge, continuing northwards as the A363 and southwards as Drynham Lane. Southview Farm is a group of buildings on the northeast side of Dursley Lane at the edge of the residential area known as Lower Studley, comprising a large detached house and ancillary buildings standing within a grid of boundary structures defining a garden, two conjoined yards and a paddock/garden extension centred on NGR:385900 / 156755.
- 1.2.2 Map regression⁷ indicates that the site and its buildings were established after 1842 and between construction of the Wilts, Somerset and Weymouth railway in 1848, which its boundaries respect, and the Ordnance Survey First Edition survey of 1887. Known as Drynham Farm in 1887, it comprised the house standing at the northeast end of a garden of almost equal width and at roughly the centre point of a grid of rectangular paddocks and yards, the northern edge of which was formed by a linear array of narrow ancillary buildings. The map conventions used indicate that the largest of these ancillary buildings, which abutted Drynham Lane/Dursley Lane, had a portal-sided south side facing the house; whilst the others were of solid-walled construction and included a set of pig sties at the northeast end of the group. Map conventions also indicate that the house, ancillary buildings and the plots they stood in were in single ownership⁸. By 1939, the ancillary buildings had been augmented by a row of linear structures along their north side and by smaller free-standing buildings in the yard to the south of them, and the house extended eastwards from its back wall, but the layout of the farm buildings and associated plots remained essentially unchanged. It is understood that the demise was subdivided in c. 1971 when the agricultural buildings and a narrow strip of yard along their south side were separated from the house and fenced-off, and the garden extended southwards to its present extent.
- 1.2.3 The applicant proposes to:
- (a) Retain the structure of the house within its original garden boundaries re-instated, adapt and extend its ground floor for co-working office use and refurbish its upper floor as an apartment, and construct new parking spaces along the outside (north) of its northern garden boundary.
 - (b) Demolish all other existing buildings within the site
 - (c) Construct a new retail unit and associated parking and landscaping along the northern boundary of the site
 - (d) Construct a new shared vehicular access.

1.3 Status and policy matrix

- 1.3.1 Archaeological sites and historic buildings are protected from deleterious change by the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 and the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The most important are individually identified and designated as Scheduled Monuments or Listed Buildings. Neither of those Acts or designations preclude change, but they do require the Secretary of State or the

⁷ cf. 2016 assessment report, Figure 3

⁸ the convention – an elongated 'S' shape across the plot boundaries – actually indicates that the two plots are measured together for cadastral purposes, but to all intents and purposes it also indicates common ownership.

Local Planning Authority to have 'special regard' to the desirability of preserving the 'heritage asset' and its setting from harm. In the case of Listed Buildings, that protection extends to structures within the 'curtilage'. There is no recognised legal definition of 'curtilage', but it is understood to refer to land within which the normal day-to-day functions of the designated building are/were carried out, and is usually "*in the nature of a garden, courtyard, croft or yard...*"⁹ rather than a farm yard that is functionally separate from the recreational gardens of its farm house.

- 1.3.2 That primary legislation is articulated in Policy 58 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework. Policy 58 states that "*Designated heritage assets and their settings will be conserved, and where appropriate enhanced in manner appropriate to their significance*" and requires, *inter alia*, that "*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 NPPF requires planning authorities, when determining applications effecting Listed Buildings, their settings, archaeological sites and non-designated 'heritage assets', to give great weight to the conservation of the significance of those heritage assets. The weight given to conservation should be proportionate to the importance of the heritage asset, so that for instance, 'substantial harm' to or loss of Grade 2 Listed Buildings should be exceptional. The Planning Practice Guidance to the NPPF defines 'substantial harm' as the loss of a key feature of the building's significance.
- 1.3.3 Southview Farmhouse is, since 1976, a Grade 2 Listed Building. The statutory description is as follows: "*Early C19. Ashlar, creeper covered. 2 storeys. 3 windows to west, late glazed sashes. Band over ground floor. Central doorway with brackets to cornice and lozenge glazed rectangular over light; half-glazed door. Double ridged hipped slate roof with wide eaves.*" The ancillary buildings and garden walls are not mentioned in the citation.

2 DESCRIPTION

2.1 The house

- 2.1.1 *Exterior.* As described by the statutory description.
- 2.1.2 *Interior.* Ruinous and badly vandalised. The structural walls of an 'H'-shaped plan survive at ground and first floor with cellars beneath, but the ground and upper floor structures are badly rotted and unsafe and most of the ceilings have collapsed. Most of the joinery has been removed or broken and all fireplaces have been removed.

2.2 Ancillary buildings

- 2.2.1 A single row of semi-derelict single storey sheds aligned along the public footpath that forms the northern boundary of the application site, facing southwards towards the house. The eastern half is heavily overgrown and actively collapsing, so has not been entered, but appears to comprise two conjoined sheds of rubble and brick¹⁰ construction; the western half is a portal-sided shed facing south, with a rubble wall along its north side and a rebuilt rubble wall at its west end. All three appear to have incorporated a single common rafter roof structure of machine-sawn softwood industrial queen strut trusses covered with pantiles. All three appear to be of essentially a single phase of construction.

⁹ cf. Cookson, 2000, p315-319

¹⁰ Hand-made stocks laid in EGW bond in a pale grey ash/lime mortar

- 2.2.2 The western half contains a set of OPC concrete feeding troughs and galvanised spacing bars standing on an OPC concrete floor, and the inner face of the west gable is rendered to eaves level with an OPC render. A similar row of feeding troughs stand against the outer face of the north wall of the eastern half of the row. The interior of the western half, however, has not been accessed for this study.

2.3 Gardens and yards

- 2.3.1 Those buildings, together with a breeze block garage and smaller ancillary building of machine-made brick construction, stand within a grid of rubble and brickwork walls and chain link fences that define the front garden of the house, a pair of conjoined yards to the north of the house, and a paddock or garden extension to the south of the house. Further to the east and south are open fields of grass. Thick vegetation and mature cypress trees prevent comprehensive visual survey of that ensemble, but the nature of the enclosed spaces around the house appear to be as follows:
- 2.3.2 The front - in fact only – garden is slightly wider than the house and defined by a rubble wall along the roadside with a 'wrought' steel gate of 20th century date at its mid point leading to a concrete path; a hand-made stock brickwork on rubble plinth wall along the north side of the garden; and a short length of wholly brickwork wall at its southwest corner with the roadside, the rest having been demolished in the past. The line of the demolished wall, however, is marked now by a sharp drop in ground level to the south and a linear stand of shrubs that run to close to the southwest corner of the house.
- 2.3.3 The yards to the north of the house are defined along their west side by a continuation of the roadside wall, which runs into the west gable of the agricultural shed interrupted by a wide, remotely-operated, vehicular gate of late 20th century manufacture. The random bonding of the stonework north of the gate indicated that the wall has been extensively rebuilt. The southern boundary of the western yard is formed by the north wall of the garden; the northern boundary is formed by a chain link fence on concrete posts; the eastern boundary is formed by a barbed-wire fence on timber posts. The two yards are separated, slightly, by the southern end of a rubble wall that presumably ran between the two yards N-S. The eastern yard has no southern boundary against the house. The paddock to the south of the house is defined by a chain link fence and secondary Larch-Lap fence panels leaned against it.

2.4 Surroundings

- 2.4.1 Dursley Lane and its southern continuation Drynham Road are the axis for a residential extension of Trowbridge populated by a mixture of 19th and 20th century housing. There is no single dominant architectural style or spatial layout, many appear to have been individual developments and several are in poor condition. These residential developments extend southwards along Dursley Lane to the northern edge of the site and continue southwards along the west side of Drynham Road.
- 2.4.2 To the east of the farmhouse, separated from it by a c. 60m of pasture, is the main London-Bristol railway line carried on a high embankment and, immediately east of that, the densely-spaced three storey houses of the on-going Lower Studley residential expansion of Trowbridge.
- 2.4.3 To the south of the farmhouse is a narrow 'gore' of pasture bounded between the railway embankment and Drynham Lane, which terminates opposite the derelict buildings of Elm Grove Farm and, beyond that in the far distance, the slopes of Salisbury Plain.

3 ANALYSIS

3.1 Chronology, form and function

3.1.1 Collation of the historic sources and visual survey of the buildings and their surroundings suggest that Southview Farm/Drynham Farm was a small dairy farm established in the second half of the 19th century to supply the growing urban populations of Trowbridge and, via the railway, Bath and Bristol. Such units were relatively common throughout England and the more densely populated areas of Wales and Scotland, especially once the railways brought large urban populations within the farms' market areas. The shippens and milking parlours were essentially of vernacular design and construction, but these became standardised by a succession of Statutory Instruments commencing in 1885 that improved the hygiene of commercial milk production through the use of washable wall finishes and, eventually, separate shippens, milking parlours and bottling rooms. Small units such as Southview/Drynham Farm became increasingly uneconomic by the last quarter of the 20th century and the majority have been abandoned or comprehensively rebuilt and expanded. Most of the redundant farm buildings in Britain are dairy related.

3.1.2 In its earliest recorded layout (1887), Southview/Drynham Farm comprised the farm house and a range of ancillary buildings along the northern side of a pair of collecting yards, joined by smaller ancillary structures by the mid 20th century. That linear range probably comprised a portal-sided shippon and combined milking parlour; a calf shed and a bull shed, and pig sties. The sties have not survived and the two sheds are roofless and derelict. Only the shippon survives in anything like its last functional form. The OPC render against its west gable, the concrete trough and galvanised spacing bars reveal that it was last refurbished for use as a shippon after c. 1936, but in its present form it has not been used as a milking parlour. The second set of troughs, against the east end of the north wall, are of the same design and were installed by 1939, so it is possible that these are relics of the post-1936 milking parlour.

3.2 Significance and importance

3.2.1 The house, notwithstanding the inaccuracy of the statutory description in ascribing an early 19th century date, is - externally - a good example of a mid 19th century pattern book farmhouse, examples of which can be found throughout the farmland surrounding Trowbridge and neighbouring settlements. It is a relatively ubiquitous and generic design and is of modest aesthetic and historical significance and importance. Its structural fabric is of no archaeological significance and most of its decorative fabric is missing. The extent to which the house's setting contributes to that aesthetic and historical significance is difficult to judge because of the over grown nature of the site and the density of 20th century residential housing along its west and north sides. Nonetheless, the front garden survives, if only in outline, and it is reasonable to conclude that this is the original front garden as designed in the mid 19th century and with which the house was intended to be seen and appreciated.

3.2.2 The agricultural buildings would have been essential components of the farm and the functional counterpoint to the architectural elegance of the house and its garden, but it is arguable whether they are 'curtilage' structures. The house and its front garden were - and still are - an aesthetic and domestic entity separated from the farm yard and its noisome effluvia by boundary walls. The agricultural buildings were not part of the 'day to day' activities of the house. Furthermore, even if we accepted that they are 'curtilage' buildings, they are incomplete to the point of being historically unintelligible as functional buildings and as visual ancillaries to the house, or they are 20th century creations that do not relate to the house and farm as historical entities. They are essentially derelict sheds

and chain link fences and, gauged against the criteria proposed by Historic England's *Farmstead Assessment Framework* and despite their legal status as curtilage structures, they are of no significance or importance.

- 3.2.3 The later 19th and 20th century residential developments that surround Southview Farm on its west and north sides and beyond the railway embankment to the east, are, because of their architectural and spatial incoherence, deleterious intrusions within its otherwise pastoral landscape. They make a negative contribution to the significance of Southview Farm. A more unified design and layout respecting the farm buildings - such as is often the case with early 20th century housing estates – would have had a less deleterious affect on the visual appreciation of the farm as an aesthetic and visual entity.

3.3 Affect of the proposals

- (a) Retain the structure of the house within its original garden boundaries re-instated, adapt and extend its ground floor for co-working office use and refurbish its upper floor as an apartment, and construct new parking spaces along the outside (north) of its northern garden boundary. This would leave the structure and principal elevations of the farm house unaltered with its originals front garden boundaries reinstated as an aesthetic frame. Restoration of the primary layout of the garden, as recorded in 1887, would recreate some of the original setting of the house and thereby enhance its significance. Core Policy 58 requires that *"Designated heritage assets and their settings will be conserved, and where appropriate, enhanced in a manner appropriate to their significance..."* and para. 192 of the NPPF requires the LPA to *"take account of the desirability of...enhancing the significance of heritage assets..."* and this aspect of the proposals certainly exceeds the requirements of those policies. It would change the internal layout and character of the building, so we might conclude that it was cause 'less than substantial harm' to the significance of Southview Farmhouse as a Listed Building.
- (b) Demolish all other existing buildings within the site. These are either ruinous and heavily modified late 19th C agricultural buildings of generic form, or 20th century utilitarian buildings of generic form. They contribute nothing to the significance of Southview Farmhouse, so their demolition would cause 'no harm' to its significance. Their removal would necessarily cause some change to the setting of the farmhouse but the farmhouse would remain wholly comprehensible as a mid 19th century farmhouse. There would be no loss of 'key features' because the ancillary buildings have, to all intents and purposes, already been lost. If the terminology of ICOMOS were to be adopted, this 'major change' to elements of 'no' significance would be classified as 'slight harm'. Para 194 of the NPPF requires *"clear and convincing justification..."* for harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset. In this case, notwithstanding doubt about their legal status as curtilage buildings, in their present condition they are of no significance as aesthetic or even historical entities. Their restoration is unlikely to be economically or functionally viable and would involve speculative reconstruction. Ironically, this would meet the requirements of Core Policy 58 because it would conserve the buildings in a manner appropriate to their significance: i.e..none, and would be justifiable for the purposes of the NPPF.
- (c) Construct a new retail unit and associated parking and landscaping along the northern boundary of the site. This would, in essence, re-create the layout and form of the 19th century agricultural buildings with respect to Southview Farmhouse. The principal views of the farmhouse would not be altered. This would cause 'no harm' to the significance of Southview Farmhouse.
- (d) Construct a new shared vehicular access. This would merely formalise an existing access arrangement with a new turning area at its inner end. This would cause 'no harm' to the significance of Southview Farmhouse.

3.4 Conclusion

- 3.4.1 It would be reasonable to conclude, on balance, that the proposals would cause 'less than substantial harm' to the significance of Southview Farmhouse and 'no harm' to other heritage assets. That 'less than substantial harm' would be balanced by securing the optimum viable use of the farmhouse as a mixed commercial and residential unit (see D&A Statement) and by the public benefits of a high value employment facility and a retail unit.
- 3.4.2 The proposals would not cause the loss of any 'distinctive elements of Wiltshire's historic environment'.
- 3.4.3 It would be reasonable to conclude that the proposals meet the requirements of Policy 58 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Assoc. of Local Govt. Archaeol. Officers 1997, Analysis and recording for the conservation and control of works to historic buildings (ALGAO c/c Essex CC)

English Heritage 2006, *Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to good recording practice*.

English Heritage, 2011, *The Setting of Heritage Assets*. **English Heritage Guidance**. (English Heritage)

Gover, J. E. B., 1936, *The Placenames of Wiltshire*. (London, EPNS)

Heaton, M.J., 2017, Elm Grove, Drynham Lane, North Bradley/Trowbridge, Wiltshire: Archaeological and Historical Assessment.' (Non-publication planning report Ref. 3714-1v2, January 2017)

Historic England, 2015, *Managing Significance in Decision-Making in the Historic Environment*, **Historic Environment Good Practice in Planning 2**. (Historic England)

Historic England, 2015, Farmstead Assessment Framework: Informing sustainable development and the conservation of traditional farmsteads. (HMSO)

ICOMOS, 2011, *Guidance on Heritage Impact Assessments for Cultural World Heritage Properties*. (Paris)

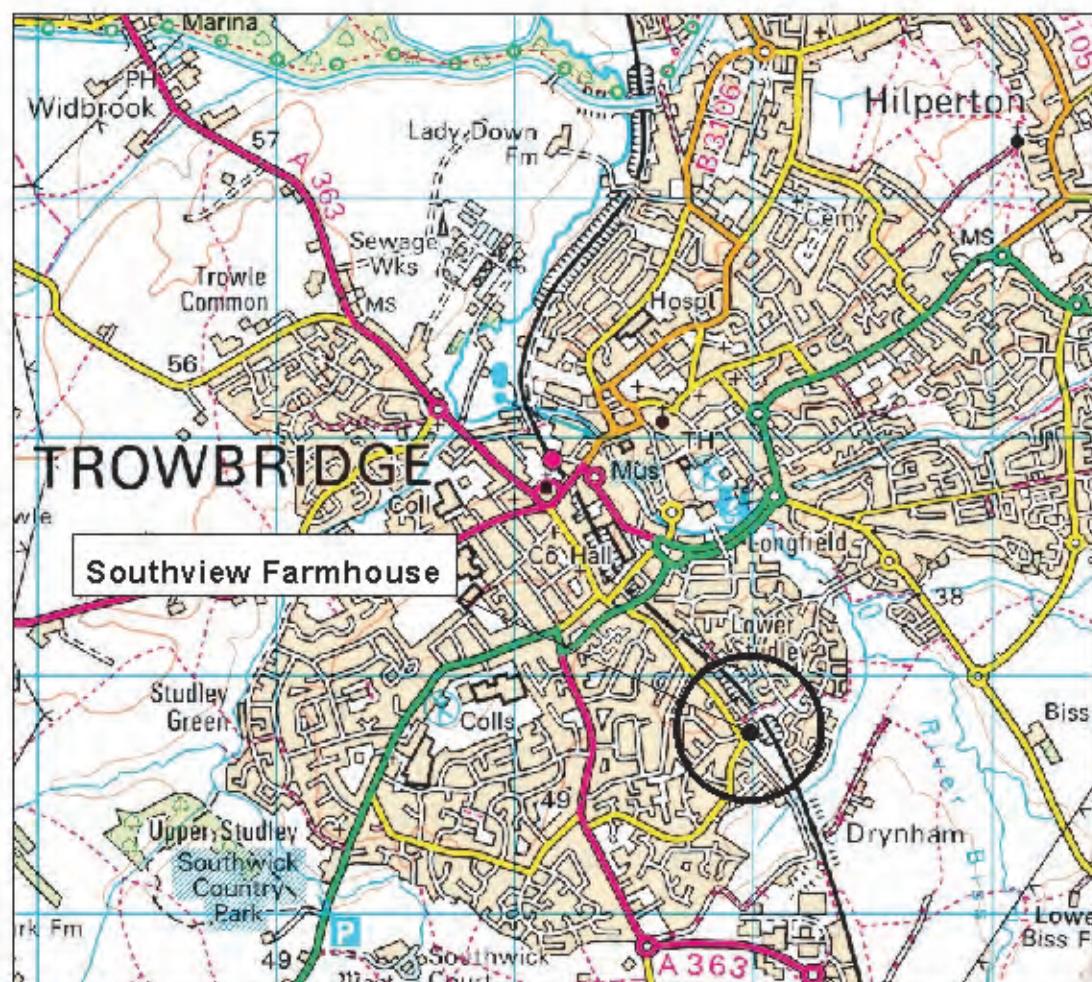
Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2018, *National Planning Policy Framework*'. (HMSO).

Sandell, R.E., 1971, *Abstracts of Wiltshire Inclosure Awards and Agreements*. (Wiltshire Natural History and Archaeological Society, Devizes)

Suddards, R., and Hargreaves, J., 1996, *Listed Buildings: The Law and Practice of Historic Buildings, Ancient Monuments and Conservation Areas* (Sweet and Maxwell)

Webster, C.J., et al, 2008, *South West Archaeological Research Framework*. (Somerset CC)

Wiltshire Council, 2015, *Wiltshire Core Strategy*. (WCC)



The house from the west, with garage in front.



The agricultural buildings from the west



The house from the east



The agricultural buildings from the east



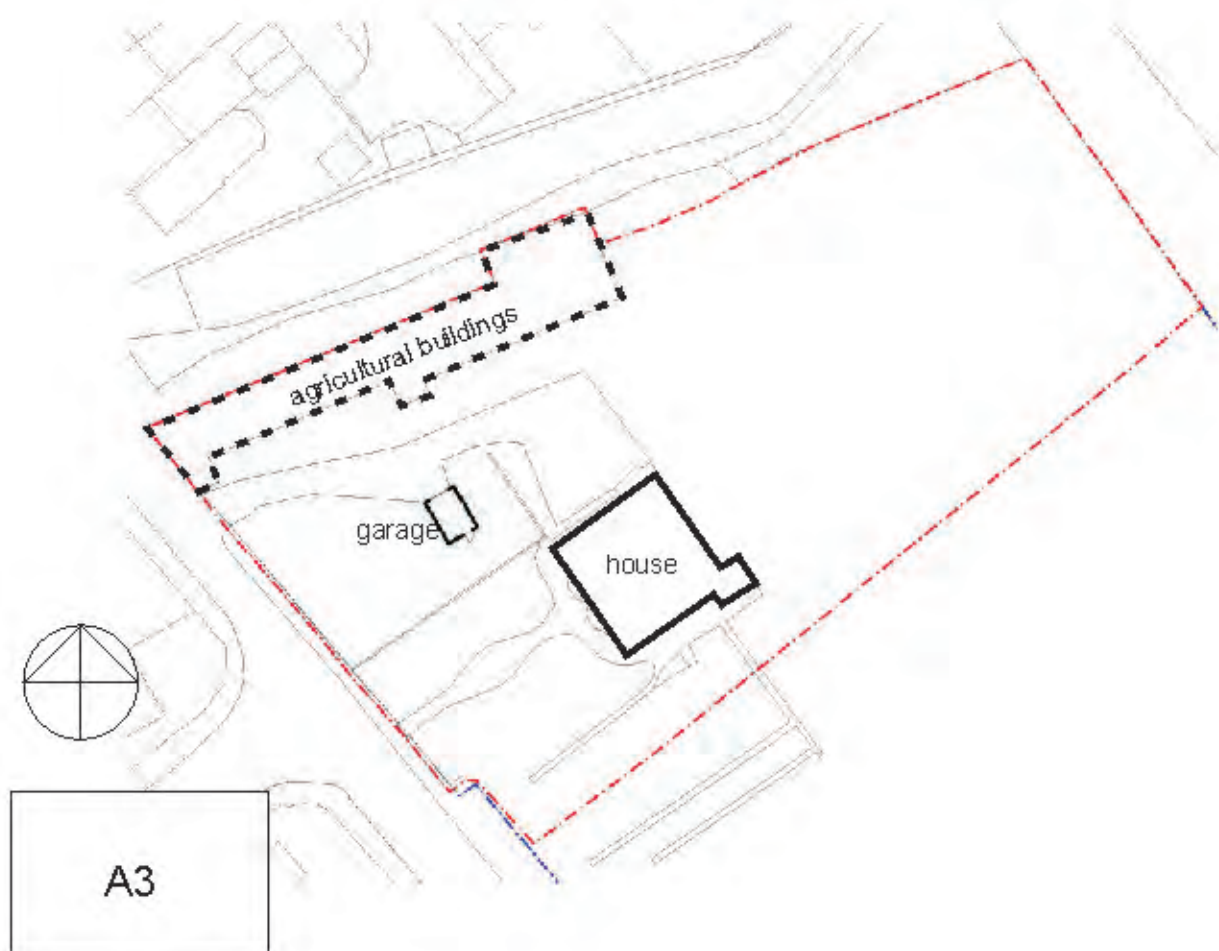
Typical condition of the interior of the house

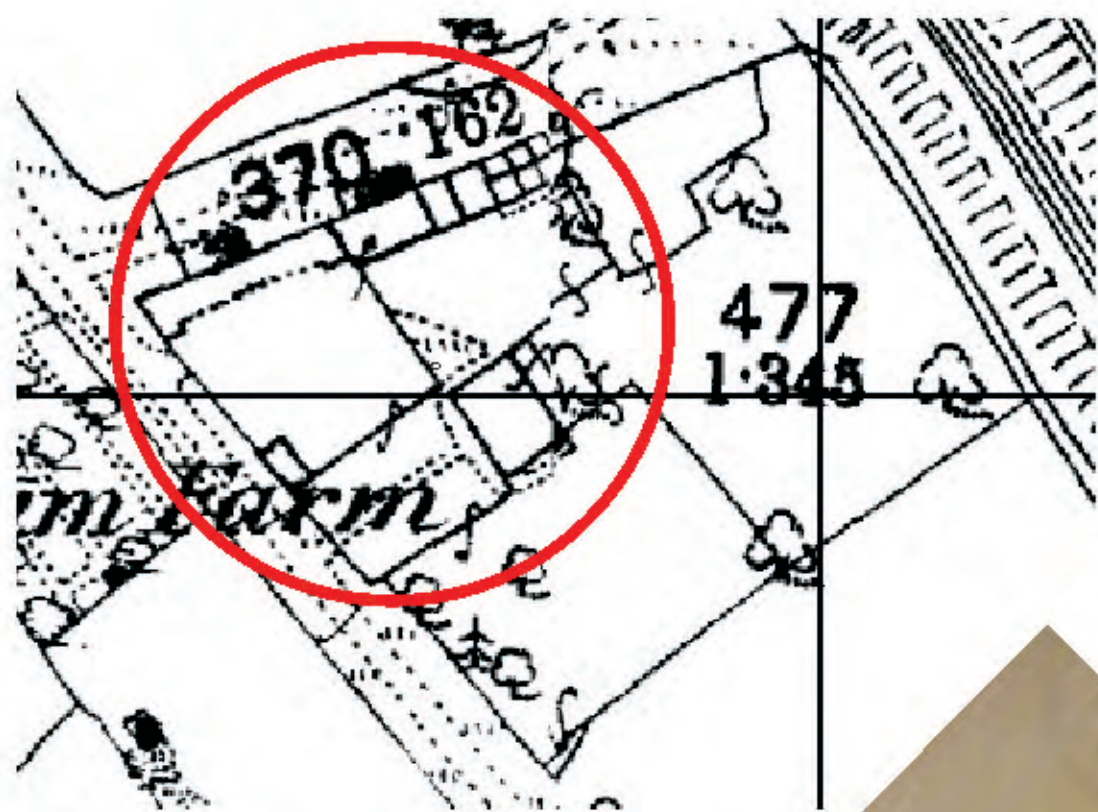


The interior of the agricultural buildings

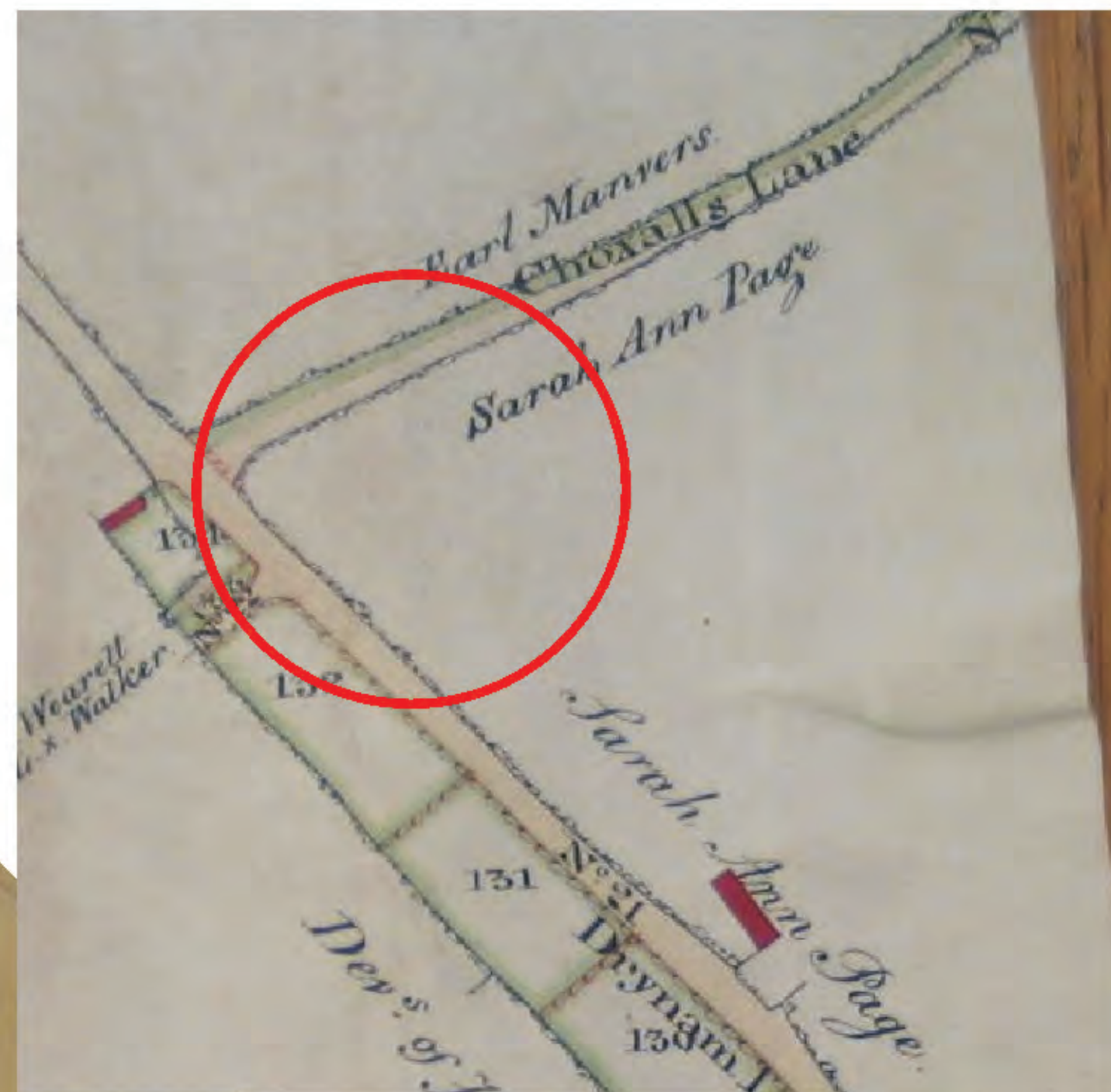


The roofless part of the agricultural building.

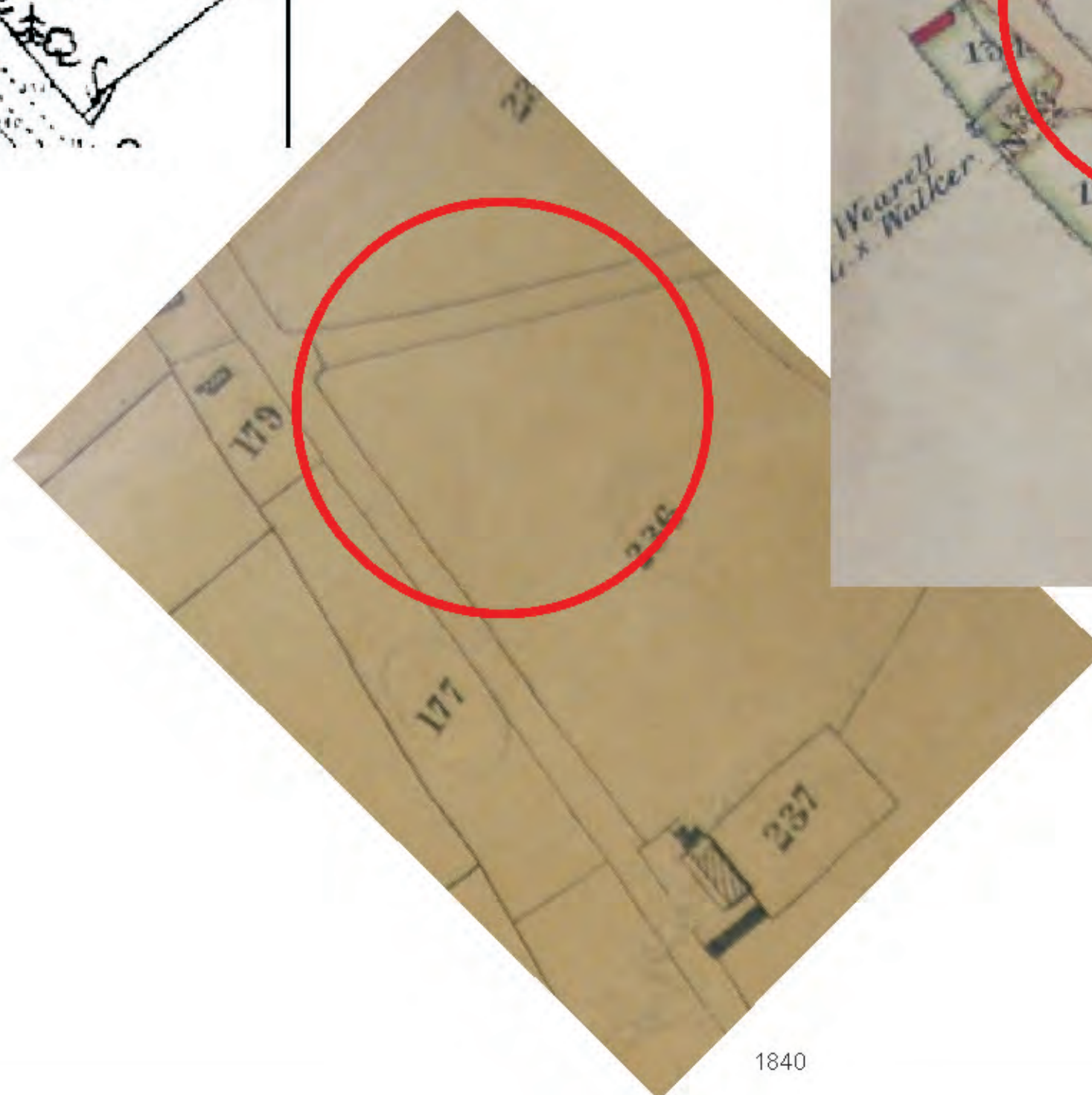




1887



1816



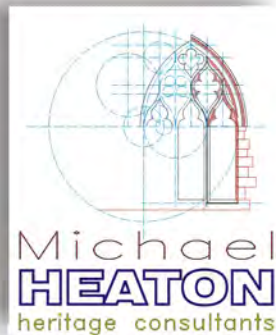
1840

A3

Figure 2

Appendix 1. Importance and Impact Classification Criteria

	DEGREE OF CHANGE ➡	Material fabric and setting wholly unaltered	Either material fabric or setting altered, but essential significance remains unaffected and both attributes remain recognisable and appreciable together as the heritage asset	Material fabric and setting both altered but essential significance of the heritage asset remains unaffected and both attributes remain recognisable and appreciable as the heritage asset.	Material fabric and setting both altered to the extent that the essential significance of the heritage asset is diminished. Both attributes remain recognisable and appreciable as the heritage asset, but its significance is diminished.	Material fabric and setting no longer capable of being appreciated as heritage assets.
↔ IMPORTANCE ↔		Neutral	Slight	Moderate	Severe	Catastrophic
Asset is a Scheduled Monument, Grade 1 Listed Building or Grade 1 Registered Landscape, or warrants designating as such.	Exceptional	No Change / No harm	Slight Change / Less than substantial harm	Moderate Change / Less than substantial harm	Severe Change / Substantial harm	Catastrophic Change / Substantial harm
Asset is a Grade 2* Listed Building or Registered Landscape, or warrants designating as such; or is an archaeological site or structure, investigation of which would augment or challenge received research frameworks.	Considerable	No Change / No Harm	Slight Change / Less than substantial harm	Moderate Change / Less than substantial harm	Moderate-Large Change / Substantial harm	Large-Very large Change / Substantial harm
Asset is a Grade 2 Listed Building or Registered Landscape, or warrants designating as such; or is an archaeological site or structure, investigation of which would confirm received research frameworks.	Moderate	No Change / No Harm	No-Slight Change / Less than substantial harm	Slight Change / Less than substantial harm	Moderate Change / Less than substantial harm	Moderate-Large Change / Substantial harm
Asset is not a Listed Building or Registered Landscape and does not warrant designating as such; or it is an archaeological site or structure, investigation of which would neither confirm nor challenge received research frameworks.	Neutral	No Change / No Harm	No-Slight Change / Less than substantial harm	No-Slight Change / Less than substantial harm	Slight Change / Less than substantial harm	Slight-Moderate Change / Less than substantial harm
Asset detracts from or damages the aesthetics, amenity or material fabric of a Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, historical landscape or of an entity that warrants designation as such or an archaeological site or structure.	Negative	No Change / No Harm	No Change / No harm	No-Slight Change / Less than substantial harm	No-Slight Change/ Less than substantial harm	Slight Change / Less than substantial harm



12 Victoria Road, Warminster, Wiltshire. BA12 8HE
01985 847791 : mike@michaelheaton.co.uk : www.michaelheaton.co.uk