



Design, Access and Heritage Statement

Stourhead Estate Office Floor and Wall Repairs

Listed Building Consent – March 2026



Tisbury Hub, Place Farm Courtyard, Court Street, Tisbury, Salisbury, Wiltshire. SP3 6LW

1.0 Background

This proposal is to carry out repairs to the ground floor in a rear office at the estate office. This floor has failed due to decay in the supporting sole plates and joists. The floorboards and joists were previously removed in the expectation of like-for-like repairs, but the extent of the decay was found to be more extensive than expected.

2.0 Heritage Significance

2.1 Listing

The estate office is a Grade II listed structure with the following listing entry:

STOURTON WITH GASPER HIGH STREET ST 73 SE (north side) 6/128

The Estate Office

GV II

Detached house, now estate office. Late C18. Dressed limestone, Welsh slate roof with coped verge to left and hip to right, rendered stacks. Two-storey, 3-window south front. Entrance to left return. Central projecting bay with 3-light casement, 3-light casements to side bays and three to first floor, bay has parapet with pierced triangles, added by Colt Hoare c1800. Right return has 6-panelled doors and 3-light casement, 2-light and 3-light casements to first floor. Left return has half-glazed door in recessed porch, moulded architrave around opening, 3-light casements to ground and first floor. Rear has door with 4 fielded panels and integral transom light, C20 steel casements and C19 wooden casements. Interior has 6-panelled doors in panelled reveals. Possible that building originally consisted of L-plan or U-plan, rear filled-in. Known as the Cottage and occupied by the agent in C19, also lived in by the 6th Baronet, Henry Hoare and his wife, whilst Stourhead (q.v.) was being renovated and rebuilt following the fire of 1902. (K. Woodbridge, The Stourhead Landscape, 1982)

Listing NGR: ST7760634018.

2.2 Historical Records

The Vernacular Building Survey of 1987 collated the following historical assessment of the offices – referred to as Ponticum House:

A house has stood on this site since at least the beginning of the C18th. The 1722 Stourhead Estate Map shows a building on this site and the 1785 Estate Map shows a rectangular structure, which in all probability is the core of the present building. The building took its present form probably in 1825, when the Hoare Annals state 'added wing etc to the Stewards house'. The house until this time had probably been a plain rectangle onto which was added a major addition in the shape of an L. The stonework and roof structure support this theory, and the 1839 Tithe Map for the Parish of Stourton clearly shows the building in its present form. Most of the internal details - doors, window & fireplaces are of this date and the pierced chevron parapet over the front bay (similar to that on the Spread Eagle Inn, north transept or Stourton Parish church and porch of the Clock Arch lodge) probably dates from this time or soon after. Used as the Agent's house in the C19th, the building was used by the Hoare family in 1895/6 upon the death of the 5th Baronet, while the main house was renovated and furniture from Wavendon moved into it. The Annals for 1895/6 state 'the Agent's house was joined by a passage to the two adjacent cottages and converted into a dwelling house for the Hoare family'. The Hoare family moved back into the Mansion house in July 1897, however they had to move back into the 'Cottage' as Ponticum House was then known, following the fire of 1902 in the main house. The building underwent alterations more than once in the C20th, in 1949 RWH Vallis B Arch FRIBA of Frome drew up plans for various minor alterations improving office space in the building. The building was then altered again in 1980 providing further accommodation for the Wessex Regional Office.

2.3 Assessment

The estate office has been modified a number of times and used for various purposes since its initial construction. The hallway and office at the rear looks to be from the 1825 changes. The building appears to have been constructed as a cottage, and the ornate parapet relates more to its setting than because of the significance of the building itself.

The floors to the ground floor rear office and hallway have been suffering from significant decay for some time. This led to works being started, but this showed up failures to the bottom of the internal wall plate.

3.0 Justification

3.1 Design and Materials

The proposed repairs to the wall are shown in drawings ST6-03 and 1768-01-01 (DHD Structures). This approach of installing a new oak sole plate higher than the existing decayed sole plate allows the timber studs to remain (after being trimmed) and requires minimal disruption to the brickwork and wall finishes.

The floor repairs require new materials to be used due to the poor condition of the existing materials. Where possible floorboards will be re-used, although this is only expected in the hallway area.

The insertion of a DPM under the sole plates will reduce the risk of future decay and therefore minimise future intervention.

The replacement hearth extension stone will be required as the existing stone is too badly damaged. Stone will be sourced to match the damaged stone. No change is expected to the inner hearth, and the fireplace will remain in place. The fireplace is unused, and this will remain the case with the current use of the building.

3.2 Access

Access to the building will be unchanged by these repairs.

4. Conclusion

The proposed change allows the reinstatement of this area of the office building ensuring continued use of the building. The proposed wall repairs retain as much historic fabric as possible. Although the floor changes required more new material, the structure will follow its original form. We therefore request that you approve this application.