

The Holford Arms
Knockdown
Wiltshire GL8 8QY

Proposed Refurbishment
of Public House and
Ancillary Works

Heritage Statement

Project Ref: AH2338

February 2026



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1. SUMMARY

Project Name:	The Holford Arms
Proposal:	Proposed Refurbishment of Public House and Ancillary Works
Location:	Knockdown, Wiltshire GL8 8QY
NGR:	383788, 188289 (Centre)
Type:	Heritage Statement

This heritage statement has been prepared in relation to proposals for the refurbishment and adaptation of the Grade II Listed Holford Arms, together with the conversion of the associated former stable range, new ancillary development and a comprehensive reconfiguration of the grounds and landscape within its curtilage.

The Site includes the Grade II Listed Holford Arms and an associated former stables and service range which is treated as a curtilage listed building. The significance of the Holford Arms derives principally from its architectural and aesthetic interest as a former roadside inn of 17th century origin, supported by its illustrative historical value, its retained historic fabric, and its long-standing communal role within the local area. A major contribution to its overall significance is made by its setting, in particular the spatial and functional relationship between the principal building, the historic yard and the ancillary ranges to the west.

The former stable range contributes to the significance of the Listed Building group through its historic functional association with the public house, its traditional masonry construction and its role in defining and enclosing the historic yard. Although the interior has been subject to extensive later alteration, the building retains sufficient external fabric, form and group value to be considered a heritage asset of special interest within the curtilage of the Listed Building.

The proposals for the Holford Arms itself are primarily repair-led and focused on securing its continued use as a public house with ancillary accommodation. The external form, scale and roof profile of the Listed Building are retained, and the works to the envelope are confined to refurbishment of openings, replacement of rainwater goods, minor roof interventions and the introduction of a reduced-scale oak porch. These represent clearly subordinate additions and are confined to the west and south sides of the building, thereby avoiding harm to the principal elevations and architectural hierarchy of the Listed Building.

The conversion of the former stables range to spa use represents a change in function but is based on a conservation-led approach that prioritises the retention of the historic envelope, the reuse of existing openings wherever practicable, and the repair and reinstatement of traditional materials, including the replacement of later corrugated roofing with natural slate. A modest extension is proposed to accommodate part of the new use and is articulated as a clearly contemporary and visually subordinate addition.

Elsewhere within the Site, an extension to the existing Function Building and a series of garden structures, terraces and landscaped spaces are proposed. These elements are designed as clearly modern insertions and are located and arranged so that the Holford Arms remains the visually and historically dominant building within the Site. The proposals rationalise existing ad hoc structures and informal layouts and introduce a more coherent and legible arrangement of external spaces.

Overall, the assessment concludes that the proposals would preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the Grade II Listed Holford Arms and the significance of the former stables range as a curtilage listed building. Any change would result in no more than a very low level of less than substantial harm, arising principally from the introduction of new built form and changes to use within the historic yard. This limited harm is clearly outweighed by the heritage benefits of repair, improved presentation, rationalisation of poor-quality additions and the securing of a viable and sustainable future for the historic inn and its associated buildings, in accordance with national planning policy and statutory duties.

2. OUTLINE

- 2.1. This heritage statement has been completed in respect of a proposal for a programme of refurbishment of the Holford Arms, Knockdown, and associated works within its grounds. The Holford Arms and its curtilage is centred on NGR 383788, 188289, and is referred to hereafter as ‘the Site’.

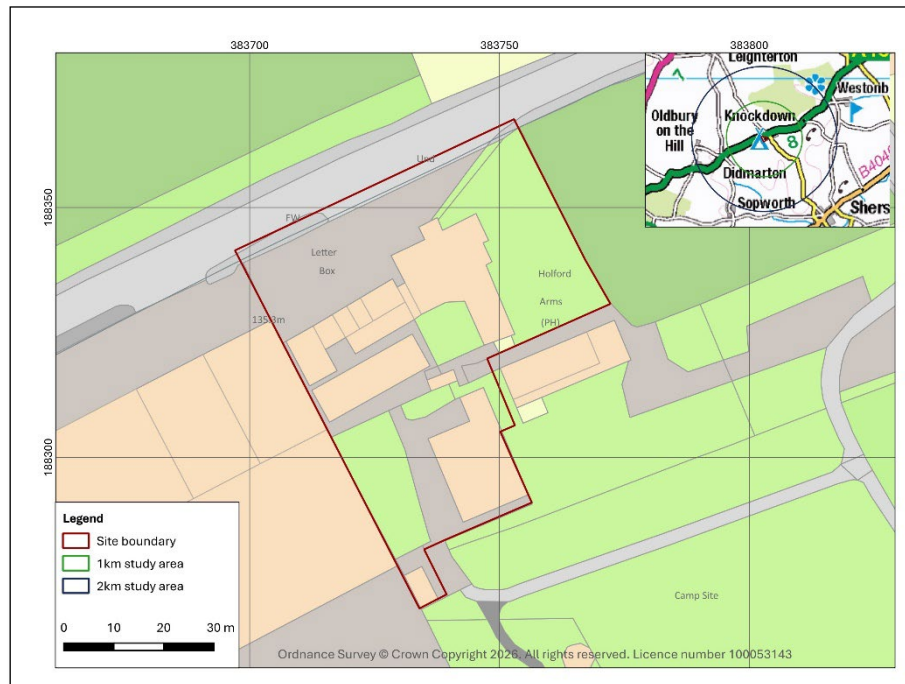


Image 1: Site location plan

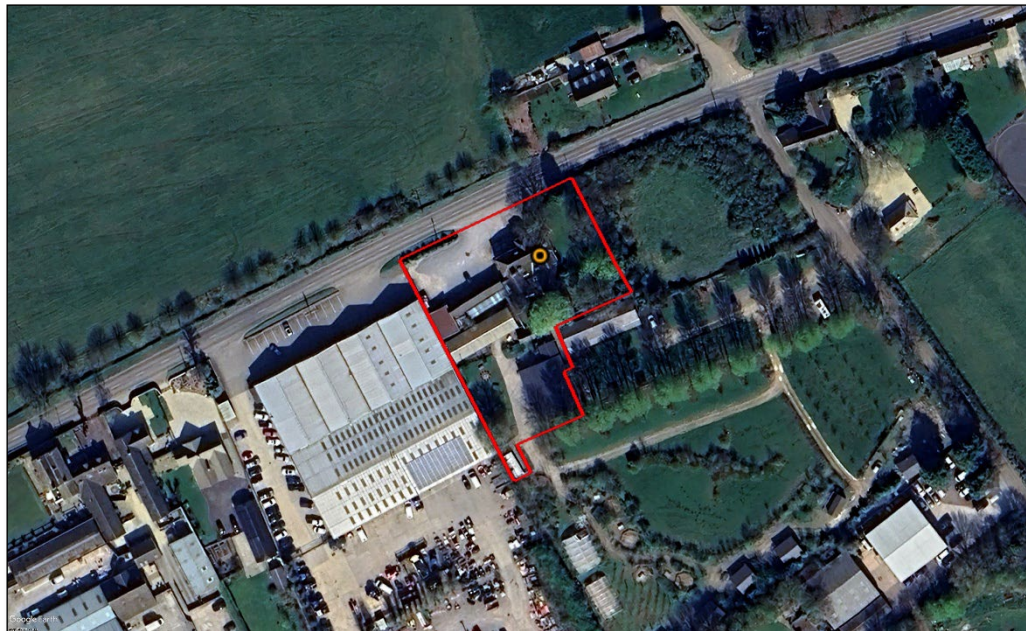


Image 2: Aerial view of Site showing Listed Building

- 2.2. The Site includes the Grade II Listed Holford Arms (List Entry 1356017) which features a number of historic and modern outbuildings within its wider curtilage. The public house also includes a rough gravelled parking area to its frontage off the A433.

- 2.3. The town of Tetbury in Gloucestershire lies c. 7km to the northeast with the *Westonbirt Arboretum*, a Grade I Registered Park and Garden (List Entry 1000457) some 580m to the north of the Site and the Grade II Listed *Avenue Farmhouse* (List Entry 1341163) situated c. 210m to the northeast.

Limitations of data

- 2.4. Much of the data used in this assessment consists of secondary information derived from a variety of sources, only some of which have been directly examined for the purposes of this assessment. The assumption is made that this data, as well as that derived from other secondary sources, is reasonably accurate.

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Assessment Criteria

- 2.7. The criteria used in this assessment to define the level of harm resulting from any proposed development are set out in Table 1, below.

Table 1: Definition of harm

Magnitude of Impact	Defined as	Harm
Major Adverse	Total loss or major alteration of the assets or change in its setting, leading to the total loss or major reduction in the significance of the asset	Substantial Harm
Moderate Adverse	Partial Loss or alteration of the assets or change in its setting leading to the partial loss or reduction in the significance of the asset	Less Than Substantial Harm
Minor Adverse	Slight change from pre-development conditions to the asset or change in its setting leading to the slight loss or reduction in the significance of the asset	Less Than Substantial Harm

Negligible	No change or very slight change to the asset or change in its setting resulting in no change or reduction in the significance of the asset	No Harm
Minor Beneficial	Slight improvement to the asset or change in its setting which slightly enhances the significance of the asset	No Harm
Moderate Beneficial	Moderate improvement to the asset or change in its setting which moderately enhances the significance of the asset	No Harm
Major Beneficial	Major improvement to the asset or change in its setting which substantially enhances the significance of the asset	No Harm

3. SITE ASSESSMENT

The Site and its setting

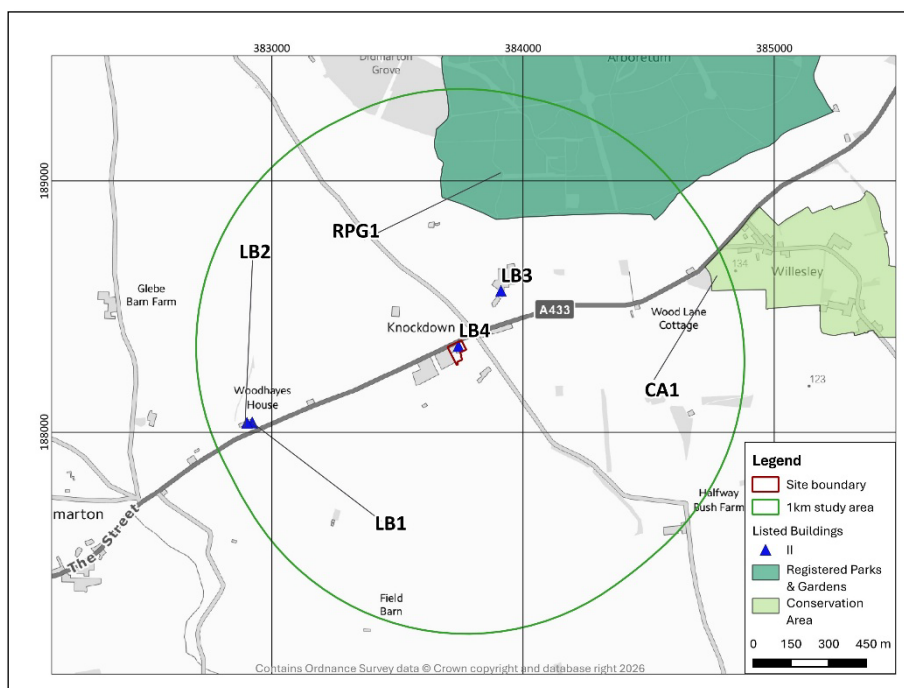


Image 3: Distribution of designated heritage assets in study area

- 3.1. An arbitrary 1km study area was established to better quantify and understand the distribution and type of designated heritage assets in proximity to the Site. The study area includes four Listed Buildings (Image 3) including The Holford Arms (Image 3, LB4), all of which are Grade II Listed.
- 3.2. To the north of the Site is the boundary of the Grade I Registered Park and Garden recorded in the National List as *Westonbirt* (Image 3, RPG1), including an arboretum and Grade I Listed principal house whilst some 1km to the east of the Site is the boundary of the Willesley Conservation Area (Image 3, CA1).

- 3.3. The Site itself, as defined by the red line boundary in Image 1, includes the Grade II Listed public house, alongside a group of outbuildings featuring an historic barn and later development. These buildings will be discussed in greater detail throughout this heritage statement.

Site visit

- 3.4. A site visit was undertaken on 09 September 2025 where the proposed development area was walked over and visually assessed. The existing condition of the Holford Arms was assessed at this time in light of the refurbishments proposed, whilst the visual and spatial relationships between various elements of the Site and the Listed Building were assessed. Observations made at the time have informed the findings of this heritage statement. Given the date of the principal building at the Site, the developmental history of the Site is illustrated below in the historic map regression section.

Historic map regression

- 3.5. The study of historic maps can help to identify the evolution of the settings of historic places, and aid in the identification of how they have changed through time. Historic map regression can also identify historic relationships, such as designed views or routeways, which may have become fossilised in the historic landscape, streetscape or possibly lost to development or boundary change.

1810 Andrews and Dury - Map of Wiltshire

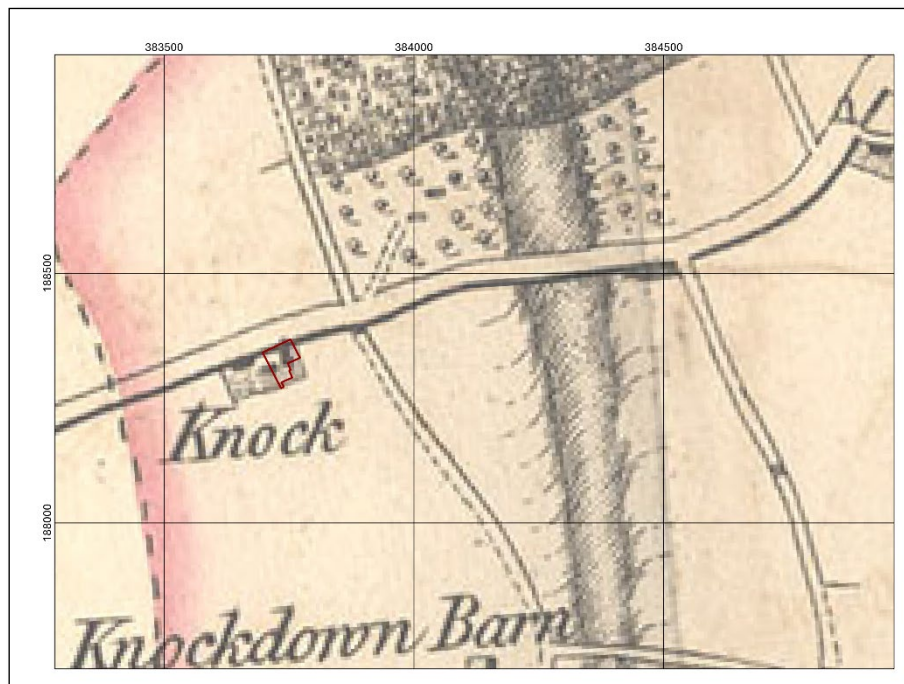


Image 4: 1810 Andrews and Dury - Map of Wiltshire

- 3.6. John Andrews and Andrew Dury produced their *Topographical Map of the County of Wiltshire* in 1773, engraved across multiple sheets at the scale of two inches to one mile, depicting settlements, road networks, parks and estate landscapes, rivers, woodland, commons and key landmarks with an unusually high level of detail for the late 18th century. A revised edition published in 1810, issued by William Faden, retained the original survey framework but incorporated a series of updates, notably reflecting the

development of the late 18th and early 19th century canal system in Wiltshire, alongside adjustments to communications and other mapped features. As such, the two editions together provide valuable evidence for changes in transport infrastructure and landscape organisation during a period of significant economic and industrial transition.

- 3.7. The map illustrated in Image 4 is a segment of the 1810 edition which shows the county boundary with Gloucestershire highlighted in red. Knockdown is noted simply as *Knock*, with *Knockdown Barn* to the south. The Holford Arms is likely the building illustrated in the east of the group of buildings, with the hamlet of Knock illustrated as enclosed within a hedge or walled boundary.

1813 Edmund Crocker – Bath (OSD 169)

- 3.8. Edmund Crocker's map of 1813 is one of the first group of hand-drawn Ordnance Survey maps produced for the military. This map covers Bath, Malmesbury and their wider environs and includes the Site at its northern edge.
- 3.9. The map illustrates a cluster of buildings around the Site, still within an apparent enclosure, although Knock/Knockdown is not names in the edition.

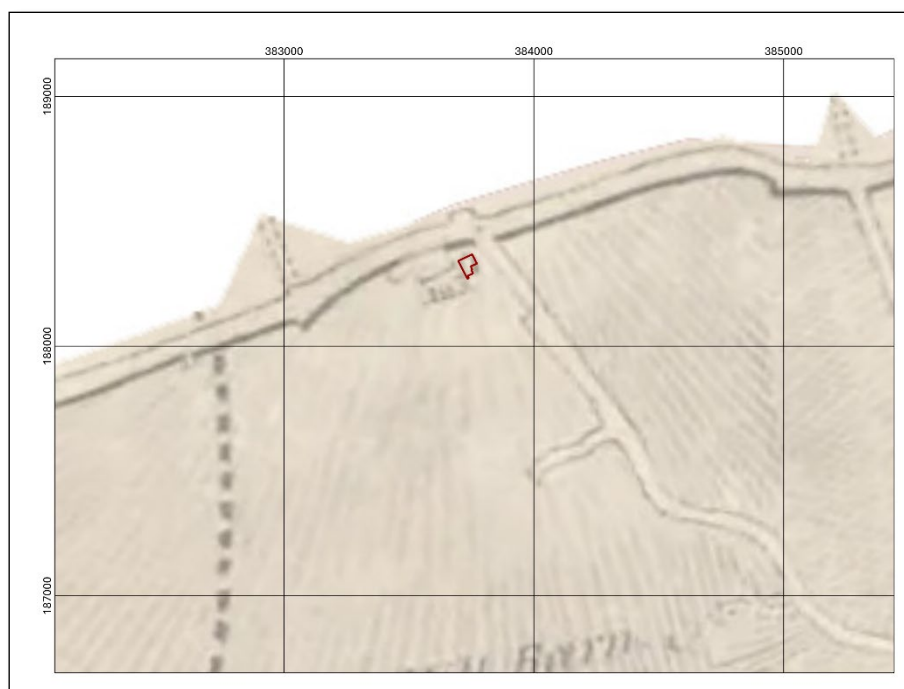


Image 5: 1813 Edmund Crocker – Bath (OSD 169)

1839 Sherston Magna Parish tithe map

- 3.10. The Sherston Magna Parish tithe map was completed in 1839 by E. and S. Rich, Didmarton, with the accompanying apportionment document completed in the same year.
- 3.11. The Site occupies Plots 142 and part of Plot 144, and these plots, together with a number of nearby plots are summarised in Table 2, below, to inform land ownership and land use during the mid-19th century. Field/plot name interpretation is generally after Cavill 2018 or further research.



Image 6: 1839 Sherston Magna Parish tithe map

Table 2: 1839 Sherston Magna Parish tithe map apportionment

Plot No.	Plot Name	Landowner	Land Use	Interpretation
142	House, Garden and Orchard	Thomas Window	-	Self-explanatory
144	Little Down	Thomas Window	Pasture	An enclosed area of downland
143	The New Inn	Thomas Window	-	Public house
147	House and Garden	Thomas Window	-	Self-explanatory
135	Part of Barn Tyning	Daniel Holborow	Pasture	Part of a hedged enclosure by or associated with a barn
141	Yards, Buildings, Malthouse	Thomas Window	-	Self-explanatory

- 3.12. The tithe map shows a public house, *The New Inn*, recorded in Plot 143, immediately east of the Site, with the Listed Building that is today the Holford Arms in Plot 142 recorded in the apportionment as a house and garden. The map however does not illustrate any buildings in Plot 143, and this discrepancy is corrected in the 1881 OS map (Image 7). The footprint of buildings in Plot 142 illustrates a recognisable Holford Arms layout, with the stables identifiable to the west of the main building. The landowner Thomas Window is recorded as holding a significant area of land in the parish.

1881 Ordnance Survey County Series 1:2,500

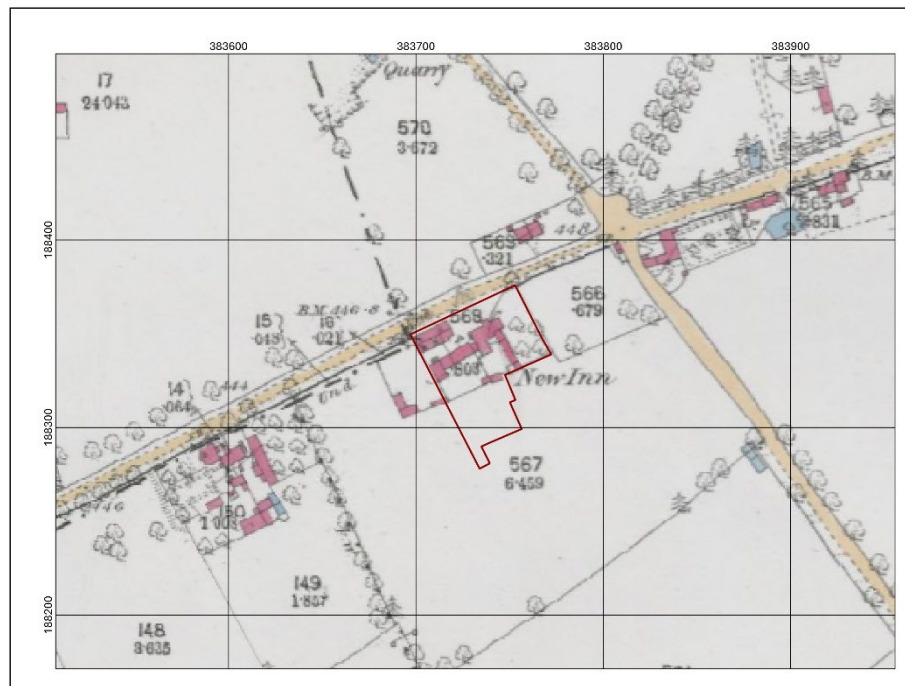


Image 7: 1881 Ordnance Survey County Series 1:2,500

- 3.13. The 1881 OS map shows the buildings at the Site under the label *New Inn*. The built form of the public house and outbuildings is confined to the north of the site, broadly reflecting the enclosure pattern seen in the early 19th century.

1899-1900 Ordnance Survey County Series 1: 2,500

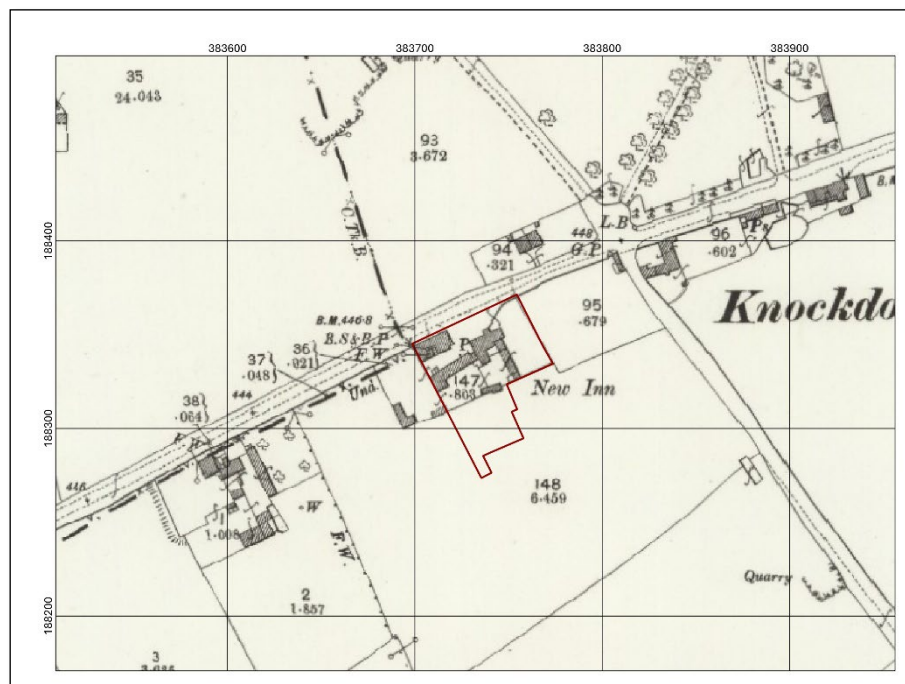


Image 8: 1899-1900 Ordnance Survey County Series 1: 2,500

- 3.14. This turn of the 20th century map illustrates no significant change or development at the Site, although a group of trees east of the main building is no longer shown.

1921 Ordnance Survey County Series 1:2,500

- 3.15. By 1921 there remains no change significant within the Site boundary.

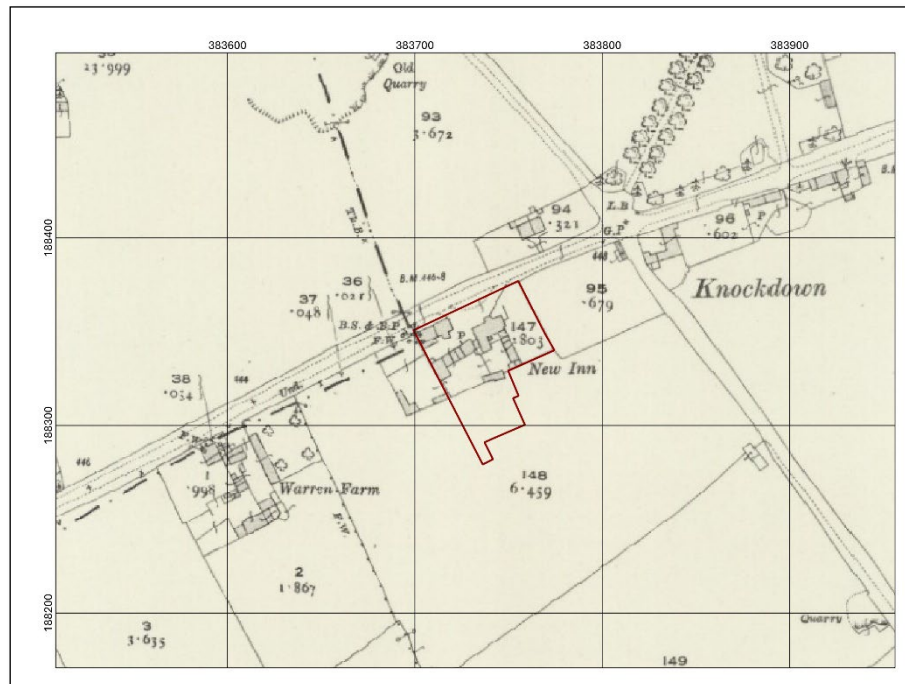


Image 9: 1921 Ordnance Survey County Series 1:2,500

1938 Ordnance Survey 1:25,000 Series



Image 10: 1938 Ordnance Survey 1:25,000 Series

- 3.16. By the later 1930s the Site continues to remain unchanged since the issue of the previous map.

1981 Ordnance Survey Plan

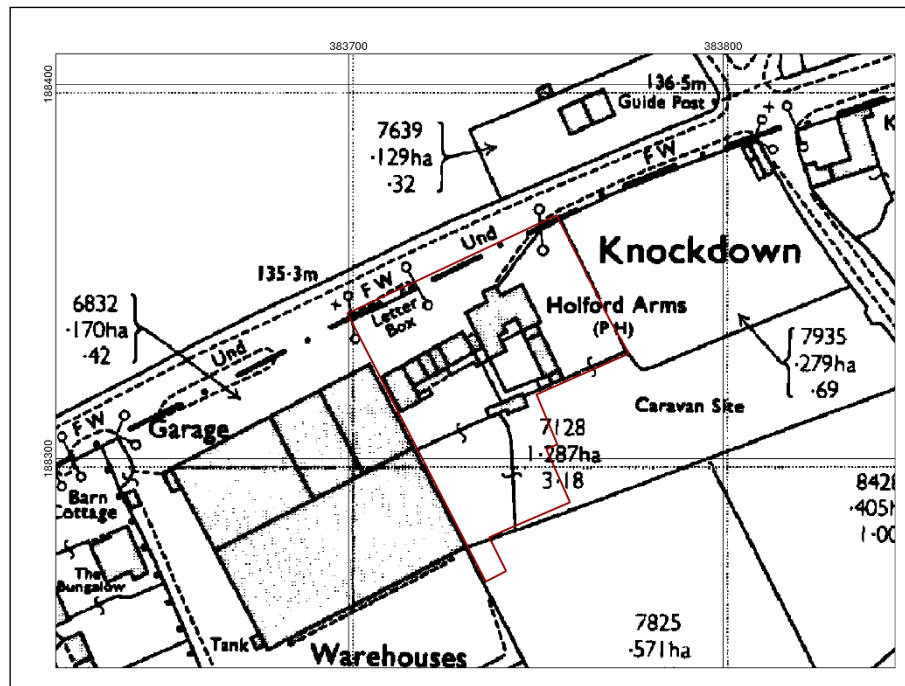


Image 11: 1981 Ordnance Survey Plan

- 3.17. There is little notable change at the Site through the middle part of the 20th century, but by 1981 the area to the south of the Site has been sub-divided, with the south of the Site now shown as a *Caravan Site*. The layout of the Holford Arms and associated outbuildings remains largely unchanged although a large warehouse is now extant to the west.

Satellite imagery

- 3.18. The modern Google Earth sequence covers the period 1999 to 2025. The 1999 image shows a change in plot boundaries south of the public house with touring caravans with two plots. By 2005 the caravan pitches are confined to an area southeast of the public house and outside the Site boundary.
- 3.19. The 2014 image shows a marquee in the southern half of the Site which is in a different position by 2017. A second structure is also positioned in the extreme south of the Site by 2017. The 2018 image shows a previously rough track south of the public house has been formalised to a degree, allowing access to the area south of the Site where pigs appear to be housed. The 2021 image shows the new timber function room in the south of the Site.

4. ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Scoping

- 4.1. Initial desk based studies, and the subsequent site visit, identified a single Listed Building, the Holford Arms, whose significance and setting was considered to be at risk of harm as a result of the proposed works.

The Holford Arms (Grade II Listed Building; List Entry 1356017)

Description

- 4.2. The Listed Building comprises a former roadside inn of 17th century origin, with later 18th, 19th and 20th century alterations (Image 12). The building occupies a rural roadside position close to the Wiltshire-Gloucestershire boundary and forms part of a historic inn complex which includes associated outbuildings to the west (q.v.).



Image 12: The Holford Arms, front and west elevations

- 4.3. The Listed Building is of colourwashed rendered masonry construction beneath a hipped stone slate roof. A projecting element to the north elevation is interpreted as a probable former staircase tower. The building is of two storeys and includes a three-bay north elevation.
- 4.4. Fenestration to the north elevation comprises tripartite casement windows at ground-floor level and 16-pane sash windows to the first floor and the upper level of the tower, all with external shutters. A part-glazed 20th-century door is located on the west face of the tower projection. The south elevation includes two lateral chimney stacks with set-offs.
- 4.5. Internally, the Listed Building retains a number of historic features, including large, chamfered beams and an inglenook fireplace within the ground-floor room to the right, evidencing the building's early origins and domestic character despite later alterations.

Contributors to the significance of the Listed Building

- 4.6. Archaeological and evidential value: The Listed Building will derive significance from its historic fabrics, the earliest of which date to the 17th century. The archaeological and evidential value of the building is considered to contribute to its overall significance at a moderate level.
- 4.7. Historical value: The Holford Arms offers illustrative historical value as an historically established rural roadside inn, reflecting patterns of historic movement, trade, and hospitality in this part of Wiltshire. Its continued adaptation through the 18th and 19th

centuries, together with associated service and stable ranges, illustrates the evolution of such establishments in response to changing transport and social practices.

- 4.8. The historical value of the Listed Building is considered to make a moderate contribution to its overall heritage significance.
- 4.9. Architectural and aesthetic value: The Listed Building is of architectural interest in respect of its early plan form, hipped stone slate roof, and well composed elevations. Architectural features, including the sash and casement fenestration, shutters, chimney stacks with set-offs, and the probable staircase projection, will contribute positively to its character.
- 4.10. While the interior has been subject to later alteration, the survival of key historic features, including exposed beams and the inglenook fireplace, reinforces the architectural interest of the building. The associated former stables and outbuildings to the west, though simpler in form, retain a functional agricultural character and form a coherent group with the main inn.
- 4.11. The architectural and aesthetic value of the Listed Building is considered to make a major contribution to its overall significance.
- 4.12. Communal value: As a historic and still functional inn, the Holford Arms has traditionally served as a social focus for the local rural community and travellers. Its ongoing hospitality related use sustains this associative communal role. Communal value is assessed as making a moderate contribution to the significance of the Listed Building.
- 4.13. Contribution of setting to significance: The setting of the Listed Building comprises its rural roadside location, historic yard spaces, and the relationship between the main inn and associated outbuildings to the west. Despite later surfacing and parking, the spatial organisation of the Site remains legible reflecting the building's historic functionality. This setting is assessed as making a major contribution to the overall heritage significance of the Listed Building, reinforcing both its architectural presence and its historic role within the rural landscape.
- 4.14. Overall: The Holford Arms, as a Grade II Listed Building, is considered a building of special interest, with significance derived principally from its architectural and aesthetic value, supported by moderate historical, archaeological/evidential and communal values, and a notable contribution from its rural roadside setting.

Former Stables Range (Curtilage Listed Building)

Description

- 4.15. The Stables comprise a long, narrow former agricultural and service range located immediately to the west of The Holford Arms and forming a principal enclosing element to the historic yard associated with the inn (Image 13).
- 4.16. The building is aligned on a slightly different axis to the main public house. This offset relationship is considered likely to reflect an inherited earlier layout within the Site and may indicate that at least part of the range predates the present form of the Holford Arms, although later rebuilding and alteration means that this should be regarded as an informed interpretation rather than a definitive phasing.

- 4.17. The range is of mixed construction. Externally, significant lengths of walling are constructed in coursed and roughly coursed local limestone rubble, with lime mortar evident in places. The masonry more generally displays irregular coursing, variable stone size and wall thickness typical of historic rural outbuildings in this part of Wiltshire.



Image 13: Stable block west of the Holford Arms, north elevation

- 4.18. A number of former openings are visible within the external elevations, including openings that have been fully infilled, indicating alteration to the historic pattern of use and ventilation (Image 14). Surviving door openings are simple and utilitarian in form, reflecting the functional character of the building.



Image 14: Blocked opening, south elevation

- 4.19. The existing elevations demonstrate that parts of the range have been subject to later alteration and partial rebuilding, including the introduction of later rainwater goods, timber fascias and modern door joinery. The Stables also exhibit areas of corrugated roof covering and restricted access to parts of the structure.

- 4.20. Internally, the building is arranged as a sequence of interconnected spaces reflecting its use for stabling, storage and servicing rather than domestic occupation. The existing plan identifies areas in use as a dry store and areas where stored materials cover the floor. The internal character of the building has, however, been significantly altered. Modern softwood stud partitions, later wall linings and extensive corrugated sheet linings beneath the roof are present. These elements serve to conceal parts of the original internal wall surfaces and roof construction in several areas of the range.
- 4.21. Where visible, the structure includes simple roof timbers and historic masonry walls, although these are fragmented by later interventions and repair phases. The overall character of the interior is therefore that of a repeatedly adapted working building rather than a coherent preserved historic interior.
- 4.22. The Stable forms an important element of a visually and functionally coherent group with The Holford Arms and other ancillary structures around the yard, and its relationship to the principal Listed Building remains readily legible.

Contributors to the significance of the Listed Building

- 4.23. Archaeological and evidential value: The Stable derives archaeological and evidential value from the survival of its historic built fabric, most notably the external limestone rubble walling, the legible former openings and the retained historic footprint and massing of the range. The building also retains evidential value in its spatial arrangement and its physical relationship to the historic yard, which together illustrate how the site historically functioned as a working complex associated with the public house.
- 4.24. However, the evidential value of the building is compromised in places by extensive later alterations, including modern internal linings, stud partitions and corrugated roof linings, which obscure or replace earlier structural evidence.
- 4.25. Overall, the archaeological and evidential value of the Stable is found to contribute to its overall significance at a moderate level.
- 4.26. Historical value: The Stable offers illustrative historical value as part of the historic service and working infrastructure associated with The Holford Arms. It provides direct evidence for the former stabling, storage and ancillary functions that supported the operation of the inn and its wider plot.
- 4.27. The visible divergence in alignment between the Stable and the public house, together with the character of its masonry and plan form, suggest that at least part of the building may relate to an earlier phase of development at the Site, possibly of agricultural origin.
- 4.28. The numerous internal alterations and modifications evident within the building reflect long term functional change, repair, and adaptation over a considerable period, reinforcing the interpretation of the range as a working structure that has evolved in response to changing operational needs.
- 4.29. The historical value of the Stable is assessed as a moderate to major contributor to its overall heritage significance.
- 4.30. Architectural and aesthetic value: The architectural and aesthetic value of the Stable is derived principally from its external form, its simple vernacular character and the survival of traditional limestone rubble walling.

- 4.31. The building is of utilitarian design, with limited architectural embellishment, and its significance lies in its representative agricultural and service character rather than in any particular stylistic or decorative quality.
- 4.32. Later alterations, including modern joinery, rainwater goods, partial rebuilding and the introduction of corrugated roof coverings and internal linings, have reduced the visual coherence of the building and have diminished the legibility of its earlier architectural form, particularly within the interior.
- 4.33. This notwithstanding, the building continues to make a positive visual contribution to the historic yard group through its scale, massing and traditional masonry construction, and the architectural and aesthetic value of the Stable is found to represent a moderate contributor to its overall heritage significance.
- 4.34. Communal value: The Stable has more recently formed part of the wider public-facing environment of The Holford Arms. In particular, its southern elevation has previously provided the physical backdrop to an outdoor bar and associated seating area, meaning that the building has directly contributed to the public use and social life of the inn.
- 4.35. Although the building does not currently perform a public function, this recent use as part of the external public house environment reinforces its associative communal value as an element of the operational curtilage of the Holford Arms and the communal value of the Stable is considered a moderate contributor to its heritage significance.
- 4.36. Contribution of setting to significance: The setting of the Stable is defined by its relationship with The Holford Arms and the historic yard which lies between and around the buildings. The outbuilding plays a key role in enclosing and defining this yard and in maintaining a clear functional hierarchy between the principal public building and its ancillary ranges.
- 4.37. Although modern surfacing and temporary structures within the yard have altered the immediate character of the space, the historic spatial relationships between the buildings remain clearly legible.
- 4.38. The contribution of setting to the significance of the Stable is assessed to be a major contributor to its overall heritage significance.
- 4.39. Overall: The Stable is considered to be a heritage asset of special interest by virtue of its historic functional and spatial relationship with The Holford Arms and is treated as a curtilage listed building for the purposes of this assessment.
- 4.40. Its significance is derived primarily from its contribution to the historic group value and setting of the inn complex, supported by its illustrative historical value and by the survival of traditional external fabric and form. While later alteration and adaptation have reduced the evidential and architectural clarity of the interior and roof structure in parts, the building retains sufficient historic fabric, form and group value to make a meaningful contribution to the significance of the wider Listed Building curtilage.

5. PLANNING PROPOSAL

The Holford Arms

- 5.1. Externally, the historic form of the building is retained, with no alteration to the principal roof geometry or ridge heights. A series of alterations are proposed to secondary elevations, including the replacement and refurbishment of windows in decorated timber, the introduction of new vertically boarded timber doors in service locations, and the replacement of rainwater goods. A new oak porch with a natural slate roof is proposed to the principal elevation, replacing a previously approved scheme at a reduced scale. New signage is also proposed.
- 5.2. A number of lightweight timber framed structures are attached to the public house on its west and south sides, forming covered walkways and sheltered seating areas. These incorporate glass rain screens and are expressed as visually subordinate, contemporary additions intended to improve accessibility, weather protection and the relationship between the pub and the wider site. Localised roof alterations include the introduction of rooflights and enlarged access openings to existing roof voids, together with minor flat roof replacements. Proposal plans and elevations are included in Appendix 2 of this document.

The Stable Range

- 5.3. The former stables range to the west of the Holford Arms is proposed to be converted to an indoor spa facility. The scheme introduces a new leisure use comprising a reception area, bar, changing rooms, showers, sauna and steam room, hydro pool, plunge pool and infinity pool, together with associated plant and servicing spaces. A new extension is proposed to accommodate part of the spa facilities, while other elements of the scheme relate to works that have been previously consented.
- 5.4. The proposals involve repair and upgrading of the existing structure, including repairs to retained roof fabric, the introduction of new roof structure where fabric is missing, and the installation of insulated floors with underfloor heating. Existing openings are reused where possible, with new windows inserted into former openings and new doors formed where required for access and emergency egress.
- 5.5. Externally, the barn is refurbished using a combination of rubble stone plinths, timber cladding and natural slate roofing. Conservation rooflights are introduced to provide daylight to internal spaces. The extension is clearly articulated as a later addition, with a contemporary but restrained material palette that differentiates it from the historic fabric while remaining visually subordinate.

Function Building

- 5.6. An extension to the existing 2020-21 Function Building is proposed to provide an enlarged, flexible space capable of accommodating events and gatherings. The building is arranged as a single internal space, with ancillary WC facilities and servicing contained within the footprint. The roof is proposed as a standing seam metal finish, with a series of linked pitched forms.
- 5.7. Externally, the Function Building is designed as a contemporary pavilion-style structure, finished in timber cladding above a rubble stone plinth, with large areas of aluminium framed glazing to key elevations. The building is designed to be clearly distinct from the

historic public house and stables architecturally, representing a clearly modern insertion within the grounds rather than an extension of the historic yard.

Gardens and outdoor structures

- 5.8. The proposals include a comprehensive reconfiguration of the pub garden, spa garden and wider outdoor areas to create a series of distinct but connected external spaces. The garden is arranged around a sequence of terraces, lawns and planted areas, accommodating informal dining, events and quieter seating. Structures within the garden include a cart-lodge-style pergola with a clear roof for all-weather seating, several small dining gazebos, and a pizza and bar pavilion. A large lawn area is retained for overflow seating and temporary event use whilst the existing Cabin is to undergo a modest extension to the east.
- 5.9. The spa garden is designed as a more enclosed and contemplative landscape, and includes gravel paths, seating arranged around a fire pit, water features, and a series of paved terraces adjacent to spa and gym facilities. A section of existing wall is proposed to be removed to improve circulation and connectivity within this area.
- 5.10. Across the Site, hard landscaping includes a mix of Indian sandstone paving, clay pavers laid in stretcher bond, and gravel paths formed in Cotswold shingle. Seating is integrated into terraces and planted 'nooks' to create a range of spatial experiences.

Front entrance, access and landscaping

- 5.11. The front entrance and car park are remodelled as a formal arrival space combining parking, planting and pedestrian movement. The existing vehicular access is retained, with tar and chip surfacing and cobbled threshold details at the entrance. Parking areas are surfaced in gravel and incorporate EV charging points.
- 5.12. Boundary treatments include estate-style fencing and entrance gates, renovated fencing proposed to be painted in a muted green, and timber pedestrian gates controlling access between public, spa and service areas. Planting plays a key role throughout the scheme, with trees, hedging, shrubs, perennials and ornamental grasses used to frame views, provide screening, reduce noise, and soften the impact of parking and built form. New tree planting, wildflower grass verges and evergreen hedges are proposed to reinforce the landscape character of the site.

Service and Utilities Areas

- 5.13. Back of house and service areas are reorganised and surfaced predominantly in gravel, with planting beds and retained existing trees. New hedging and gates are proposed to clearly separate public and staff areas, while existing walls are largely retained, subject to localised adjustments to improve circulation.

6. ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS

Setting and significance of the Holford Arms

- 6.1. The proposals for the Holford Arms have been assessed in terms of their potential effects on the significance of the Grade II Listed Building and its setting, and, when considered within a conservation-led framework, can be understood largely as change which preserves significance and, in several respects, offers the opportunity for enhancement.

- 6.2. The works to the public house itself are principally repair and refurbishment focused. The external envelope of the Listed Building, including its historic form, massing and roof profile, is retained, and there is no proposal to alter the principal roof geometry or the established architectural hierarchy of the elevations. The replacement and refurbishment of windows and doors, renewal of rainwater goods and associated fabric repairs have the potential to deliver a modest enhancement to the architectural interest of the Listed Building where they result in the removal of later, damaged, or unsympathetic joinery and its replacement with traditionally detailed timber elements that respect historic opening proportions, glazing patterns and the survival of external shutters. On this basis, and subject to appropriate detailing and a repair focused approach to existing fabric, these works would not result in harm and can reasonably be regarded as beneficial to the long term conservation of the building.
- 6.3. The proposed timber framed covered walkways and seating structures attached to secondary elevations represent a more noticeable intervention in physical and visual terms. Nevertheless, their lightweight and visually permeable construction, together with their confinement to the west and south elevations, means that they do not undermine the principal architectural interest of the Listed Building. Where these elements replace ad hoc or poor quality structures and rationalise circulation around the building, they offer the opportunity for a net improvement to the immediate setting of the public house. Their impact on significance is found to be neutral, and potentially beneficial through the removal of clutter and the improved presentation of historic elevations.
- 6.4. A perhaps more perceivably substantial potential for impact relates to the setting of the Holford Arms. The historic significance of the building is partly derived from its spatial relationship with ancillary ranges and the surrounding yard, which express a traditional hierarchy between the public building and its working and service areas. The wider proposals, including the conversion of the former stables to spa use, the introduction of a new function building and the creation of multiple garden structures and landscaped spaces, will intensify activity within the curtilage and change the character of areas that have historically functioned as service and working spaces.
- 6.5. The principal roadside elevation and visual presence of the Holford Arms remain unaffected, and the building continues to be experienced as the overtly dominant historic structure within the Site. The proposed new development is generally located away from the primary elevation and is arranged to not compete directly with the architectural dominance of the public house. Where the landscape and garden proposals introduce more coherent surfacing, planting and routes, and where they replace informal or unmanaged spaces with a structured and legible layout, they provide a genuine opportunity to enhance the way in which the Listed Building is approached and experienced, particularly through the creation of a clearer and more dignified arrival sequence and the screening of visually intrusive service areas.
- 6.6. Although the historic service yard character will be ‘softened’ somewhat by the introduction of leisure and hospitality uses within the wider Site, the overall hierarchy between the public house and ancillary development remains readable. On this basis, the changes to setting are assessed as preserving the ability to understand the historic function and status of the Holford Arms from within its curtilage, while allowing the Site to evolve in a way that supports the continued economic and communal use and maintenance of the Listed Building.

- 6.7. Overall, when assessed within a conservation led framework that prioritises the retention of historic fabric, traditional detailing, reversible construction and the rationalisation of existing clutter and poor quality additions, the proposals would preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the Holford Arms. The scheme would result in clear heritage benefits in the form of improved presentation, repair and long term sustainability of the Listed Building and its associated environment.

Setting and significance of the Stable Range

- 6.8. The proposals for the former stable and service range have been assessed in terms of their potential effects on the significance of the range as a curtilage listed building associated with the Holford Arms, and in the context of a conservation led approach that prioritises repair, retention of historic fabric and the preservation of group and setting value.
- 6.9. The proposals introduce a new use for the building as an indoor spa and associated ancillary accommodation. This represents a significant functional change from its historic use for stabling, storage and service purposes. However, the building's significance does not derive from a specific historic internal arrangement or from the survival of coherent historic interior spaces, but principally from its historic envelope, its traditional masonry construction, its linear form, and its contribution to the historic yard group. In this context, the change of use is capable of being accommodated without harm to the fundamental significance of the asset, provided that the building's external form, massing and principal elevations are preserved.
- 6.10. The scheme is repair led in a number of important respects; the proposals include the repair of existing roof structures where retained, the introduction of new roof structure only where historic fabric is missing, and the replacement of later, poor quality roof coverings with a consistent natural slate finish. This represents a clear enhancement to the architectural character of the range, particularly where corrugated and visually intrusive roofing currently detracts from its appearance and from the character of the yard. The reinstatement of a traditional roof covering will improve the legibility of the building as a historic ancillary range and strengthen its contribution to the wider group value of the Site.
- 6.11. The external walls of the stable range, which comprise its principal surviving historic fabric, are retained. The proposals do not propose any loss of significant areas of historic masonry, and where openings are reused or reinstated within existing historic openings, this preserves the established functional character of the elevations. The use of new windows and doors within former openings, rather than the widespread creation of new ones, limits physical intervention in the historic envelope and supports a conservation based approach. Where new openings are required for access and fire safety, these are limited in number and are located so as to minimise disruption to the most intact sections of historic masonry.
- 6.12. The proposals introduce new timber cladding to parts of the external elevations. While this represents a visual change in material form, it also provides a clear distinction between retained historic masonry and areas of new or heavily altered fabric. When carefully detailed and restrained in extent, this approach avoids false historicism and allows the surviving historic fabric to remain visually legible.
- 6.13. The introduction of conservation rooflights is similarly capable of being accommodated without harm to significance. These will enable the building to be used without extensive

alteration to the elevations and will be appear as discreet interventions within the roof plane. Their use supports the retention of the historic external wall fabric and avoids the need for additional new window openings in the masonry.

- 6.14. Internally, the building has been significantly altered and is characterised by modern stud partitions, blockwork, linings and corrugated roof sheets. The significance of the stable range is not principally derived from its internal finishes or spatial subdivision, but from its envelope and its role within the yard group. As such, the creation of new internal spaces to accommodate spa facilities and plant can be undertaken with limited impact on significance, provided that any surviving structural elements of historic interest are retained where feasible and that unnecessary removal of historic masonry or structural fabric is avoided. The replacement of modern internal linings and poor quality partitions offers an opportunity to rationalise the interior and, where historic wall surfaces or structural elements are revealed, to enhance understanding of the building's historic construction.
- 6.15. The proposals include a new extension to accommodate part of the spa facilities. The extension is again clearly designed as a contemporary addition and is physically and visually subordinate to the historic range. Its form, scale and positioning do not compete with the long linear character of the stable and allow the historic range to remain the dominant element within this part of the Site. By consolidating new accommodation within a clearly defined extension, the scheme reduces pressure to subdivide or significantly alter the historic fabric of the extant building, thereby promoting the preservation of its significance.
- 6.16. The setting of the stable range is closely associated with its relationship with the Holford Arms and the historic yard. The proposals will increase the intensity of activity within the yard and introduce a recreational use where a more utilitarian function previously existed. However, the established historic association between the stable range and the more general public use of the Site, including its recent role as a backdrop to an outdoor bar area, demonstrates that the building has already formed part of the public realm of the inn in recent phases of its history. The proposed use is considered to represent an evolution of this relationship rather than a fundamental break from it.
- 6.17. The repair and visual upgrading of the stable range, together with the improved treatment of surrounding spaces and planting, will enhance the contribution that the building makes to the setting of the Holford Arms by reinforcing the legibility and quality of the historic yard group. The replacement of poor quality elements and the proposed treatment of the building as part of a coordinated scheme will improve its presentation and reduce the incremental erosion of fabric and character that may result without comprehensive redevelopment.
- 6.18. Overall, when assessed within a conservation led framework that prioritises the repair and retention of historic masonry, the reinstatement of traditional roof coverings, the use of existing openings wherever possible and the clear distinction between historic and new fabric, the proposals would preserve the special interest of the stable range as a curtilage listed building. The proposals would result in no more than a very low level of less than substantial harm, the result of the introduction of new built form and changes to use. This is considered to be significantly outweighed by clear heritage benefits evident in the repair, enhanced presentation and long term sustainable use of the historic building and its contribution to the wider setting of the Holford Arms.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1. The proposals relate to the refurbishment and adaptation of the Grade II Listed Holford Arms, the conversion of the associated former stables range to spa use, the extension of the existing Function Building and the reconfiguration of the wider grounds and landscape within the curtilage of the Listed Building.
- 7.2. This assessment has established that the significance of the Holford Arms is derived principally from its architectural and aesthetic value as a historic roadside inn, supported by its illustrative historical and communal value, and by the contribution made by its rural roadside and yard setting. The former stable range makes a meaningful contribution to this significance through its historic functional association with the inn and its role in defining the historic yard and group value of the Site.
- 7.3. The proposals for the Holford Arms itself are conservation led and focus on repair, refurbishment and sensitive adaptation to support continued public house use and associated accommodation. The historic form, scale and architectural hierarchy of the Listed Building are retained, and the small number of contemporary additions are confined to secondary elevations and are lightweight and clearly subordinate. Subject to appropriate detailing and a repair focused approach to retained fabric, these works would preserve the special interest of the Listed Building and, in several respects, enhance its presentation and long-term conservation.
- 7.4. The conversion of the former stables range to spa use introduces a change in function but does not undermine the principal sources of its significance, which lie in its external form, traditional masonry construction, linear character and its contribution to the historic yard group. The repair of the building, the reinstatement of traditional roof coverings, the reuse of existing openings and the clear distinction between historic fabric and new work ensure that the proposals preserve the special interest of the building as a curtilage listed structure.
- 7.5. The introduction of a modest, clearly contemporary extension to the stables, together with the extension to the Function Building and the various garden structures, will increase activity within the curtilage and soften the historic service character of parts of the yard. However, the Holford Arms will remain the dominant historic building within the Site, and the established hierarchy between the principal public house and ancillary development will remain legible. The proposals are arranged so as not to compete with the principal elevations or setting of the Listed Building.
- 7.6. The wider landscaping and access proposals will rationalise existing informal and poor-quality areas of surfacing and development and introduce a more coherent and structured arrangement of spaces, planting and circulation. This will improve the experience and understanding of the Listed Building within its setting and provide a clearer and more dignified arrival sequence.
- 7.7. When assessed against the statutory duty under Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the proposals would preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the Grade II Listed Holford Arms and the contribution made by its setting. In relation to the former stables range, the proposals would preserve its special interest as a curtilage listed building and its contribution to the significance of the wider historic group.

- 7.8. The scheme would result in no more than a very low level of less than substantial harm relating to the stables range, a curtilage listed heritage asset, the result of the introduction of new built form and changes to activity within the historic yard. This minor harm is clearly and convincingly outweighed by the public and heritage benefits of repair, enhanced presentation, removal of poor quality and ad hoc additions, and the delivery of a viable and sustainable future for the historic inn and its associated buildings.
- 7.9. The proposals are found therefore to accord with National Planning Policy for the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment and represent an appropriate and sustainable response to the significance of the heritage assets at the Site.

8. SOURCES AND REFERENCES

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Oldmapsonline.org

Wiki Commons

Appendix 1: Gazetteer of heritage assets

FIG. REF.	HE/HER REF.	NAME	TYPE	PERIOD	SUMMARY	STATUS	EAST	NORTH
Designated Sites and Monuments (Historic England data:1km study area)								
Listed Buildings (1km study area)								
LB1	1089730	Woodhayes House	House	Post-medieval	Detached house. Mid/late C18	II	382922	188039
LB2	1153221	Stables and Coach House at Woodhayes House	Stables and coach house	Post-medieval	Stables and coach house. Mid/late C18	II	382901	188038
LB3	1341163	Avenue Farmhouse	Farmhouse	Post-medieval	Farmhouse. Late C18/early C19.	II	383912	188562
LB4	1356017	The Holford Arms	Inn	Post-medieval	Inn. C17 with C18, C19 and C20 alterations.	II	383743	188343
Registered Parks & Gardens (1km study area)								
RPG1	1000457	Westonbirt	RPG	Medieval & post-medieval	Pleasure grounds, park, and arboretum, largely of c 1830-60, associated with one of the most expensive of the Victorian country houses.	n/a	385655	190052
Conservation Areas (1km study area)								
CA1	MDV15662	Willesley	CA	Post-medieval	Medieval and post-medieval settlement core	n/a	385180	188656

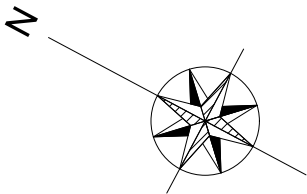
Appendix 2: Proposal drawings



Ground Floor



SCALE MEASUREMENTS SHOWN IN METRES.
ACCURACY OF SCALE CAN ONLY BE ASSURED ON
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PLANNING NOTES

DEMOLITION NOTES

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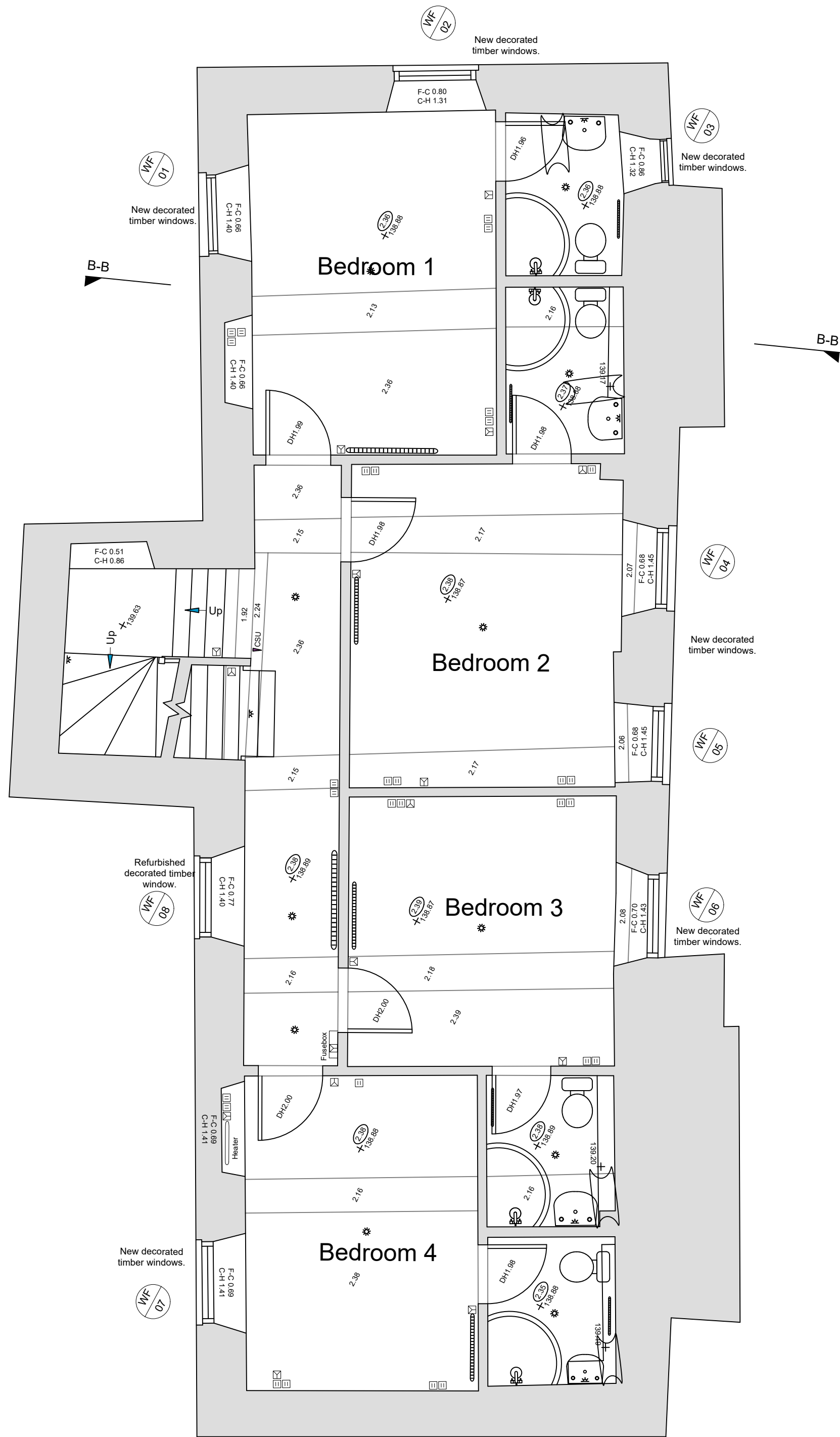
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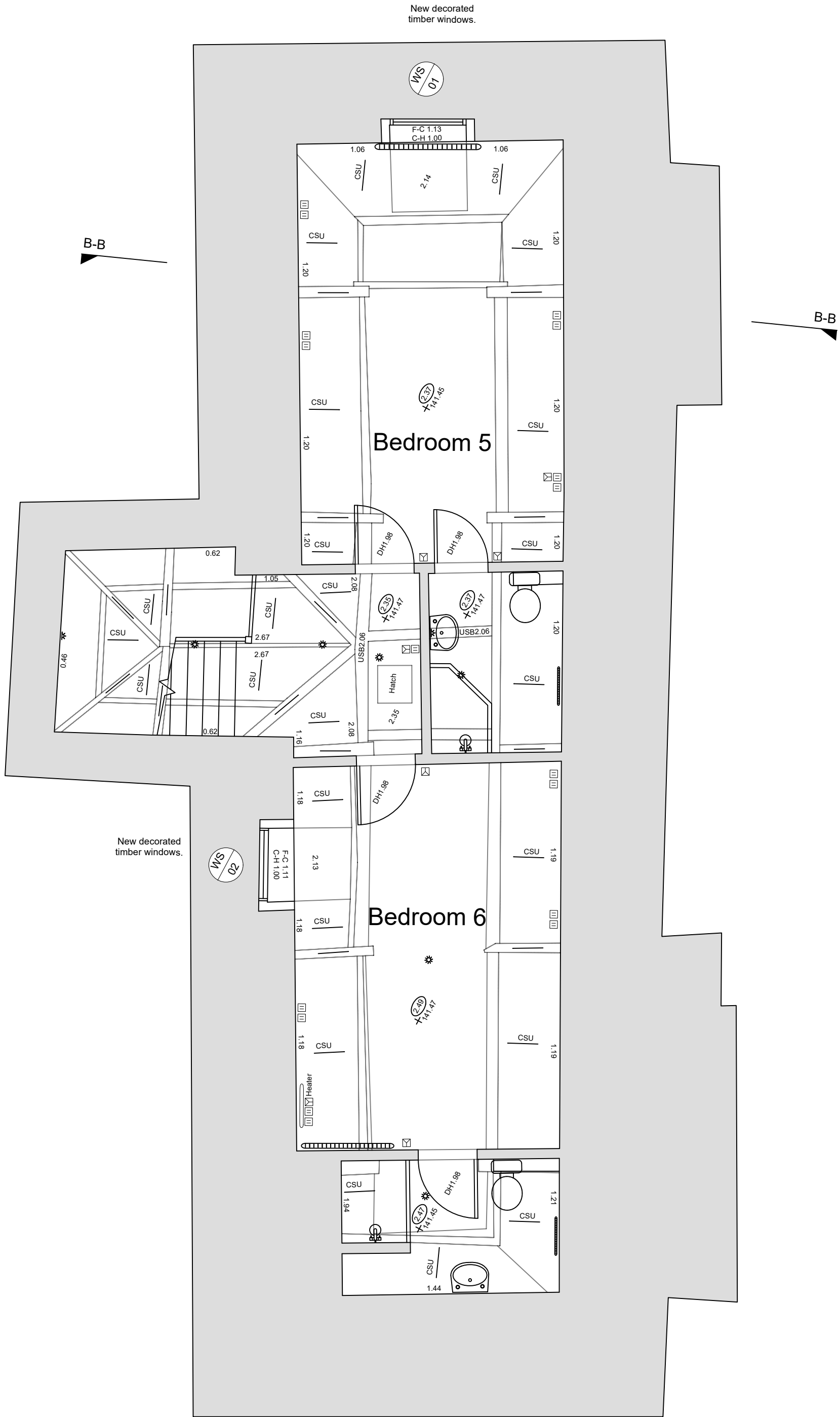
ALTERATIONS

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AS PROPOSED

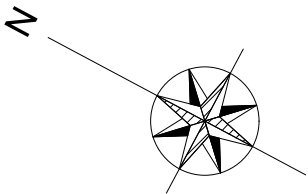
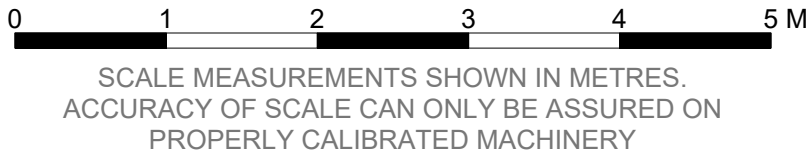
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First Floor



Second Floor



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CONSTRUCTION NOTES
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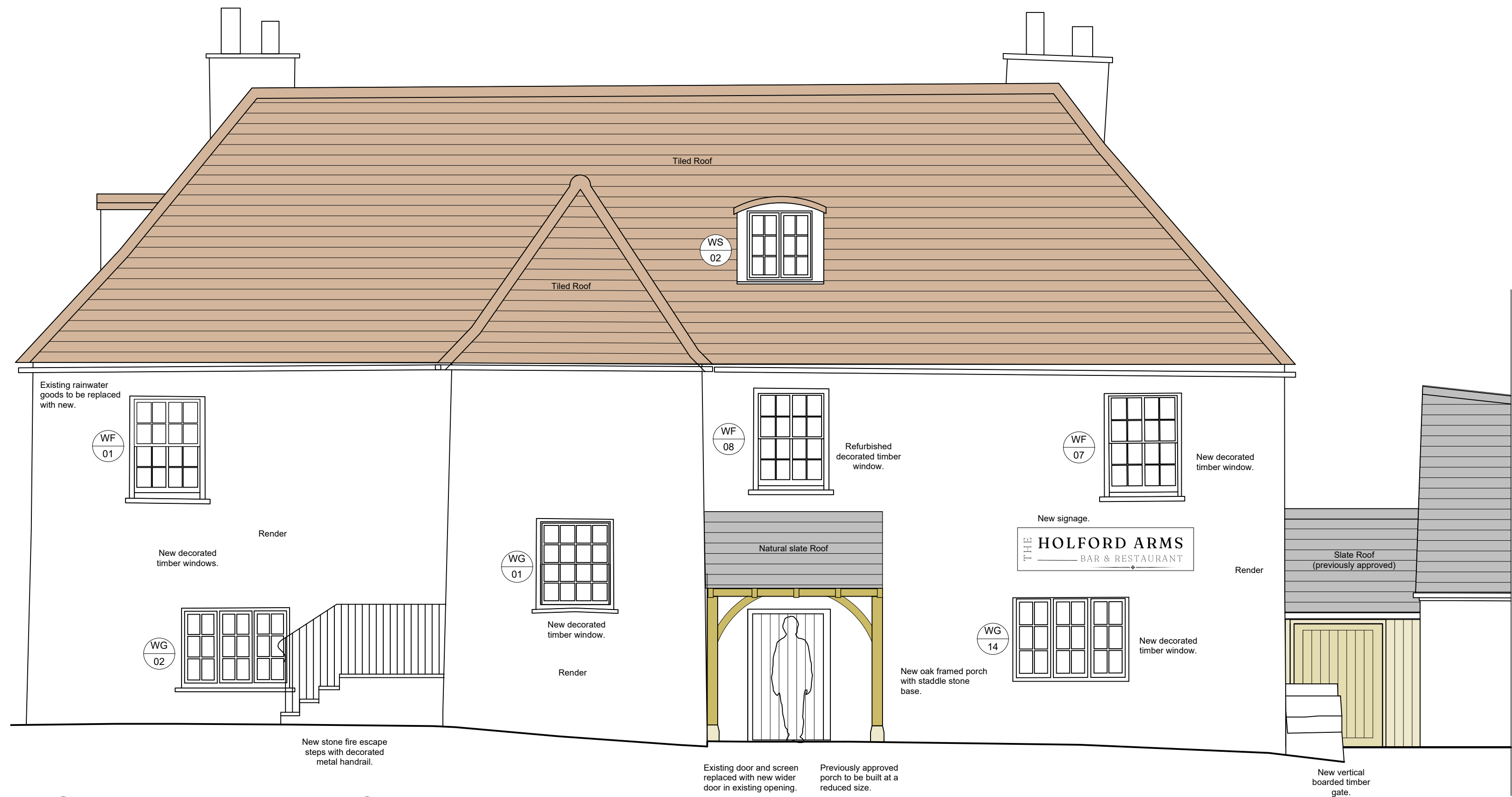
HOLFORD ARMS,
KNOCKDOWN
ALTERATIONS
PUB FIRST & SECOND FLOOR
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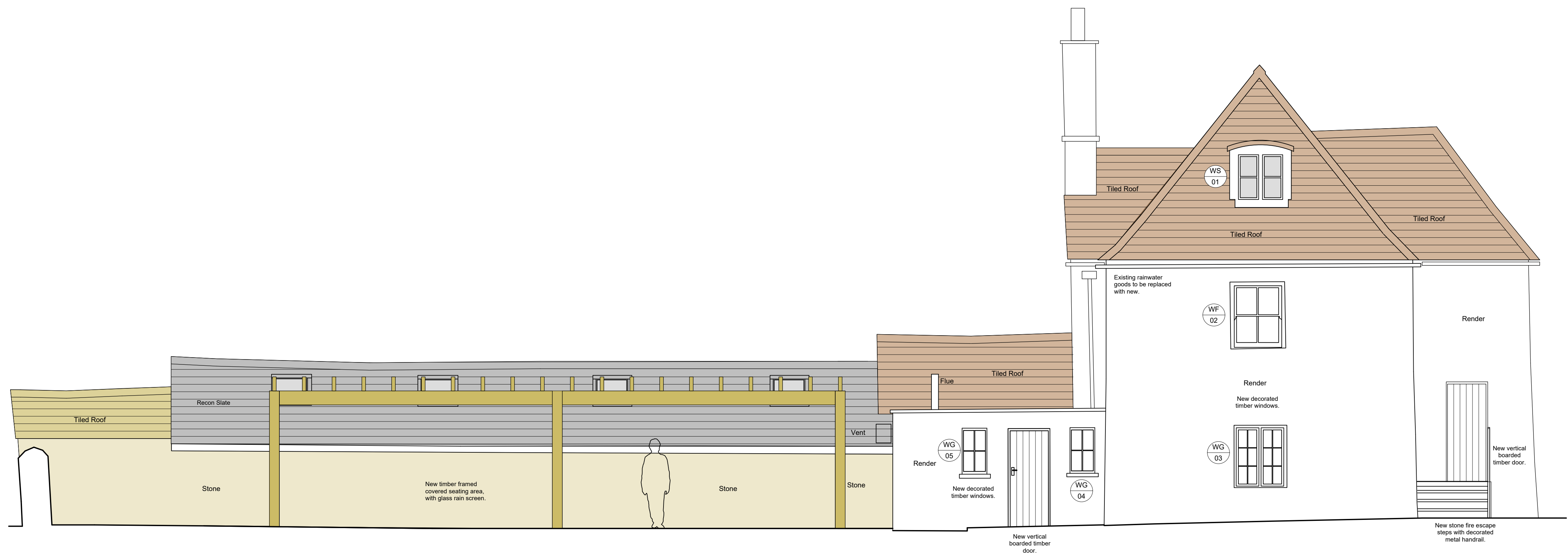


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NORTH ELEVATION



EAST ELEVATION

PLANNING NOTES
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DEMOLITION NOTES
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PUB ELEVATIONS
AS PROPOSED 1/2

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SCALE MEASUREMENTS SHOWN IN METRES.
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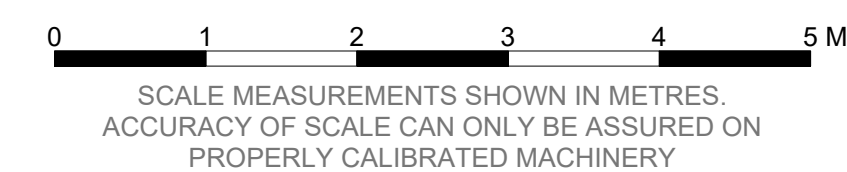


MAINTENANCE NOTES

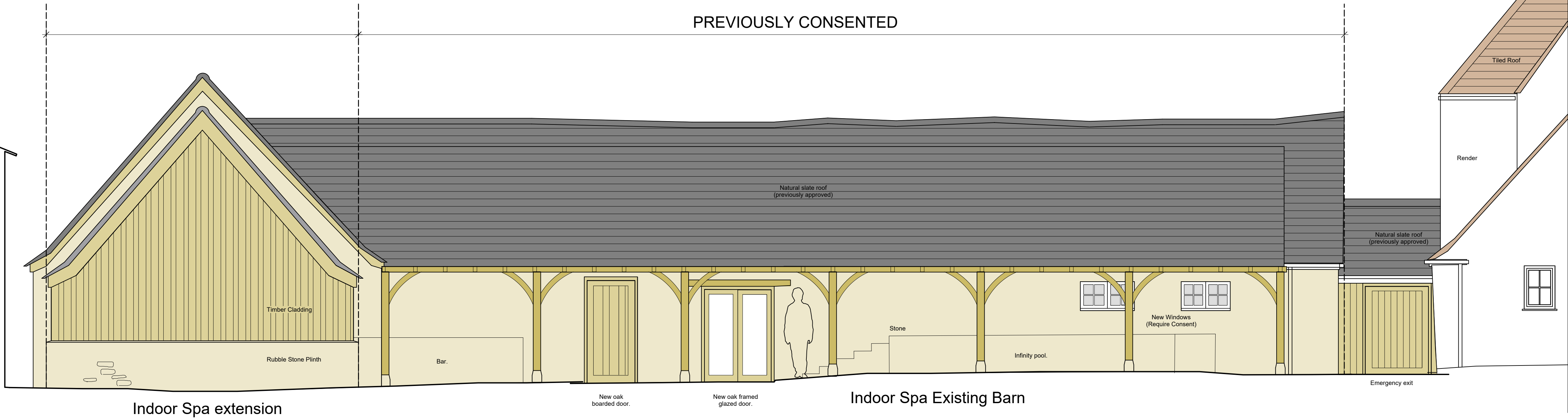
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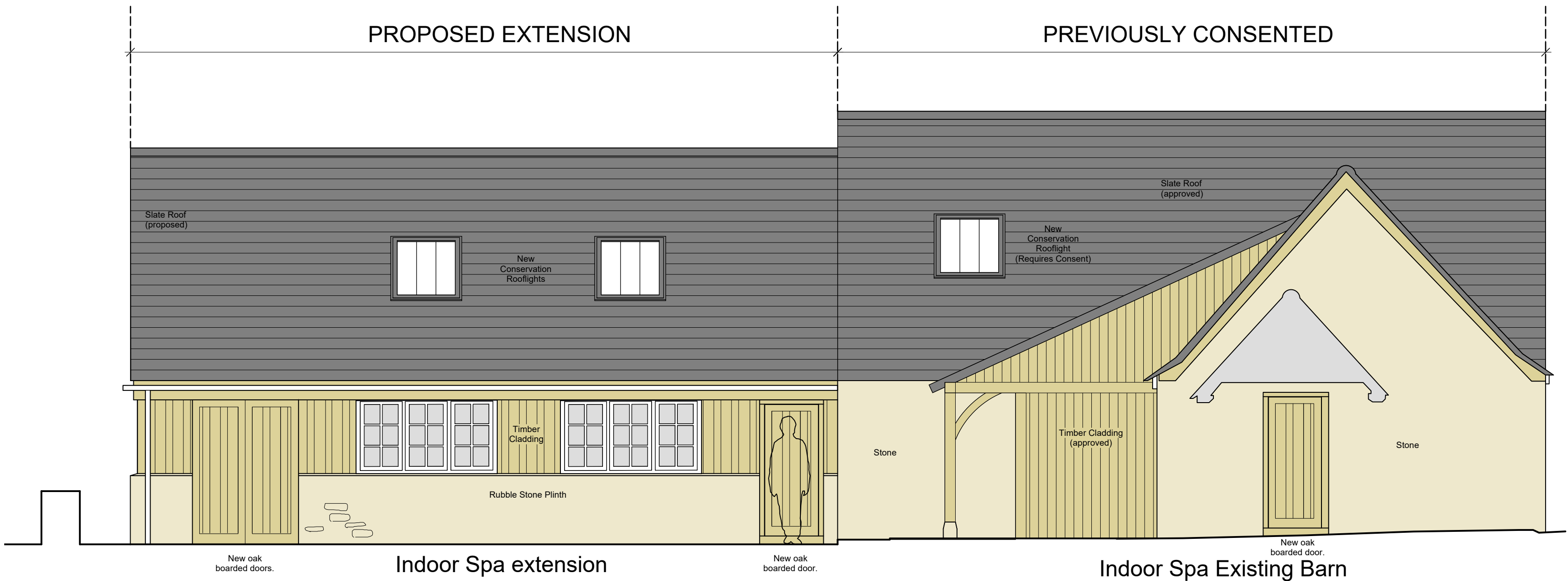
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PROPERTY



SOUTH EAST ELEVATION



NORTH EAST ELEVATION

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SCALE MEASUREMENTS SHOWN IN METRES.
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BARN ELEVATIONS
AS PROPOSED 1/2

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BARN ELEVATIONS
AS PROPOSED 2/2

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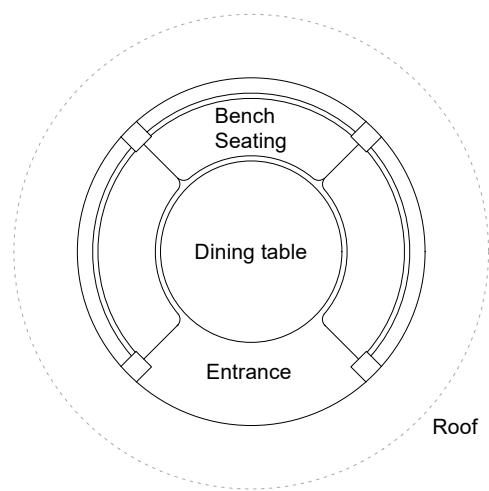
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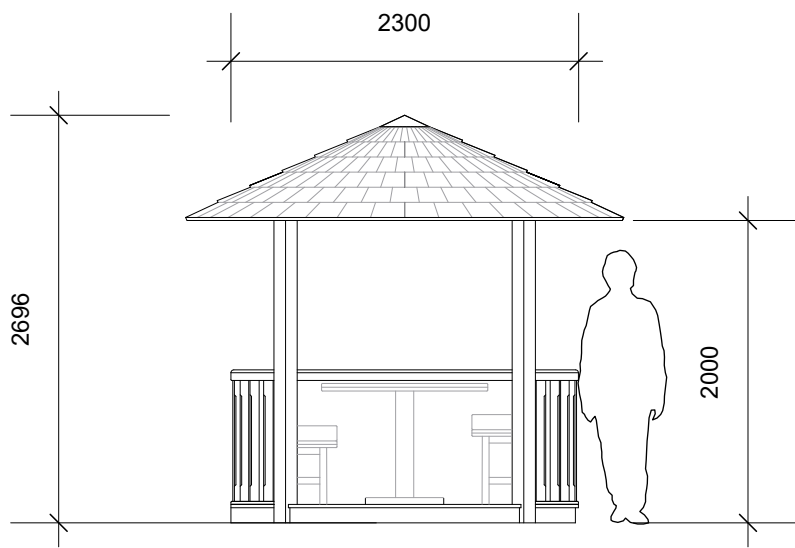
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Revision

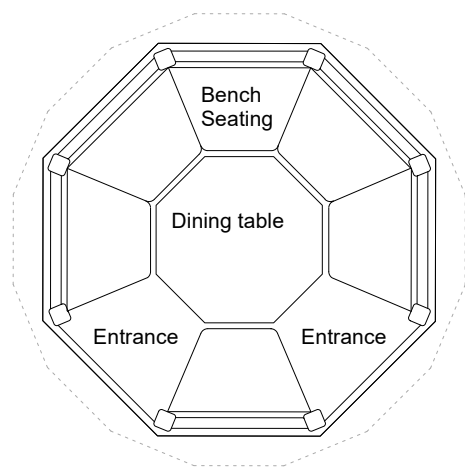
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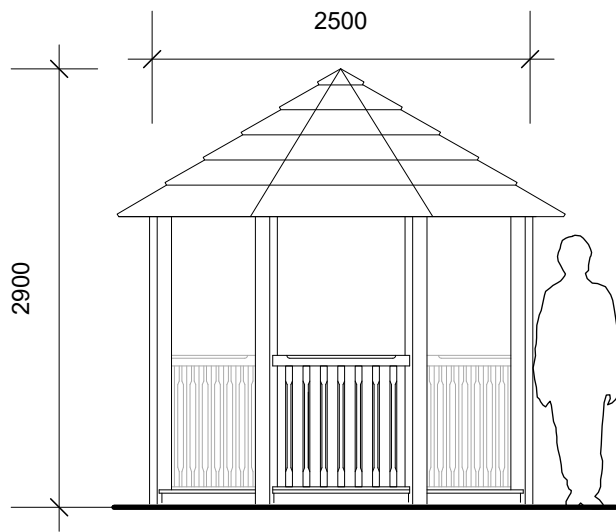
CHELSEA PAVILION PLAN



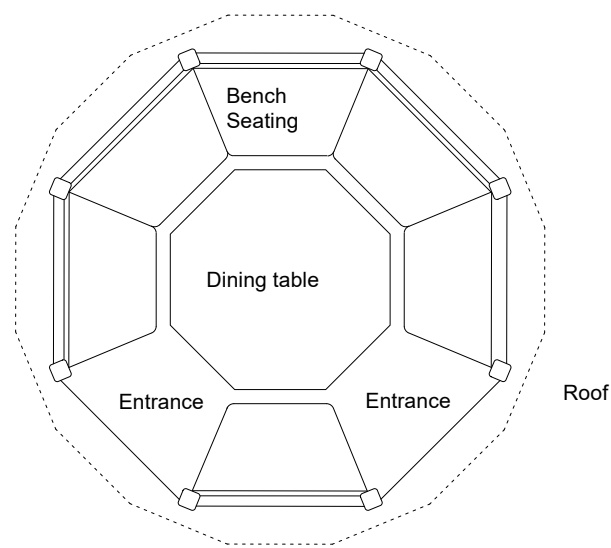
CHELSEA PAVILION ELEVATION



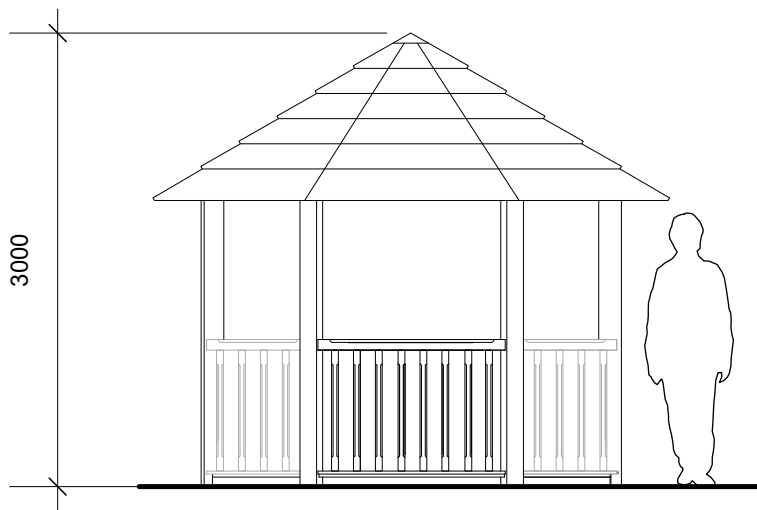
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TUDOR PAVILION ELEVATION



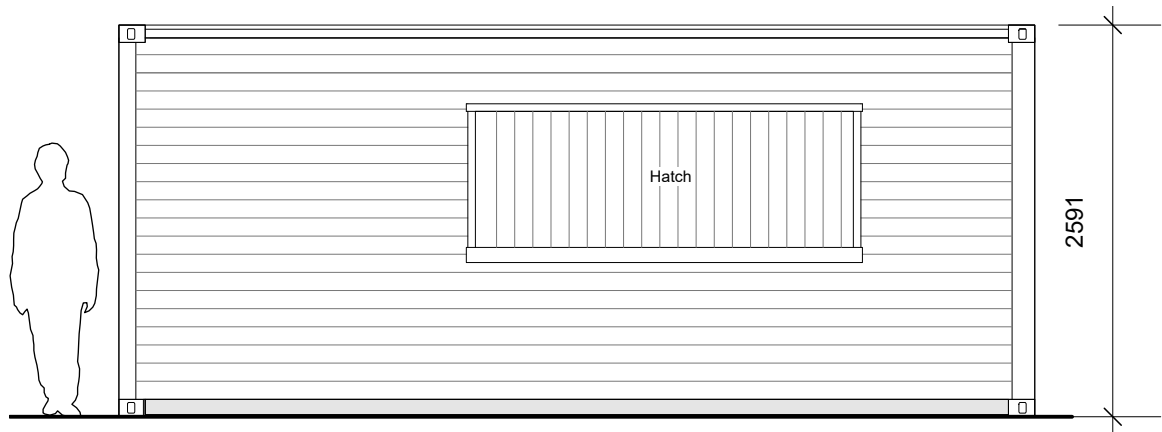
GUINEVERE PAVILION PLAN



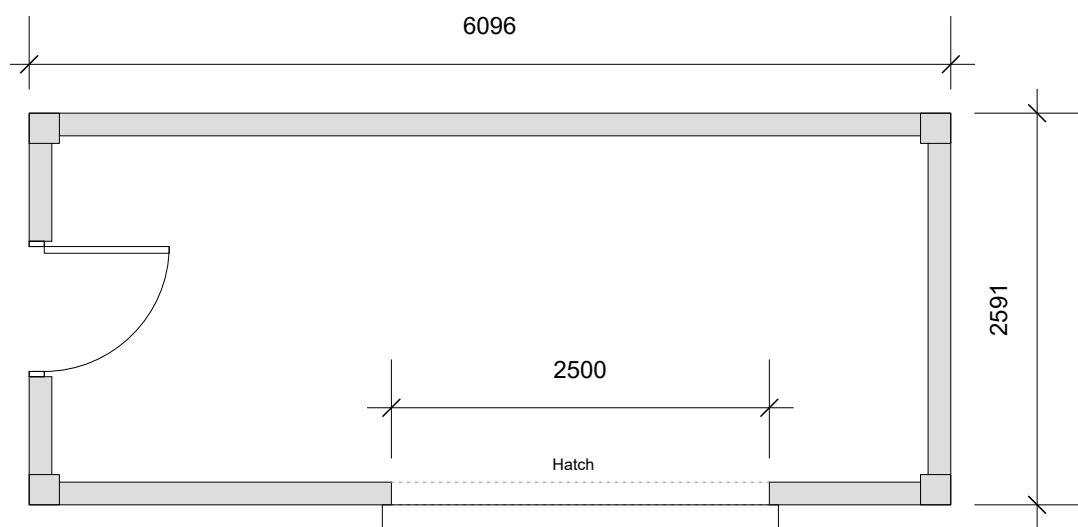
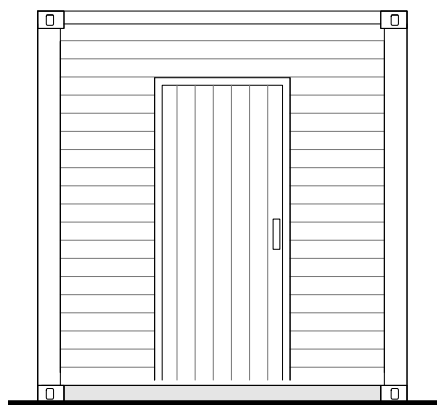
GUINEVERE PAVILION ELEVATION

Dining Pavilions Roof - Cedar shingle roof with lead top cone.
Dining Pavilions Floor - Timber decking

Pizza Pavilion - Shipping container clad in larch.



PIZZA PAVILION ELEVATIONS



PIZZA PAVILION PLAN



SCALE MEASUREMENTS SHOWN IN METRES.
ACCURACY OF SCALE CAN ONLY BE ASSURED ON
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GARDEN PAVILIONS
AS PROPOSED

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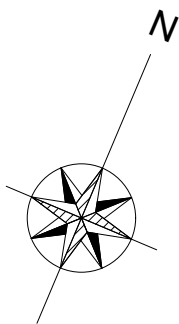
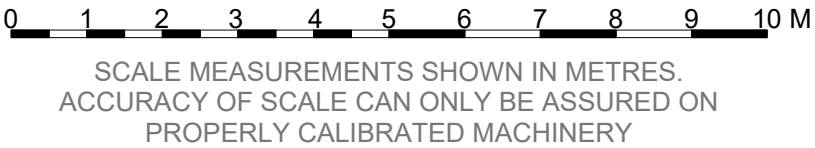
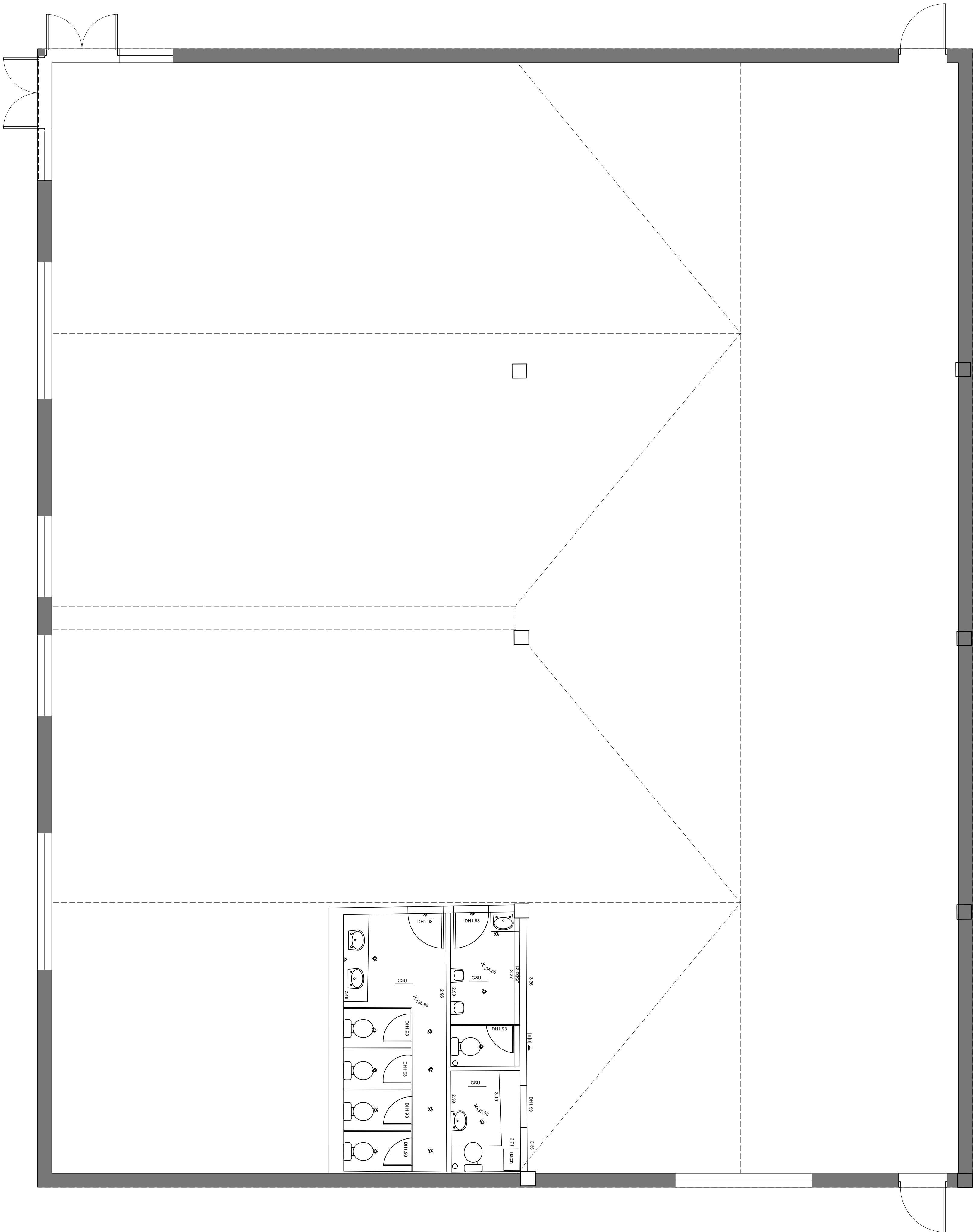
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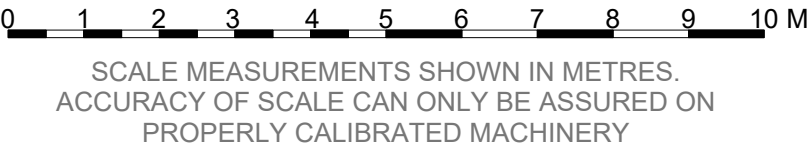
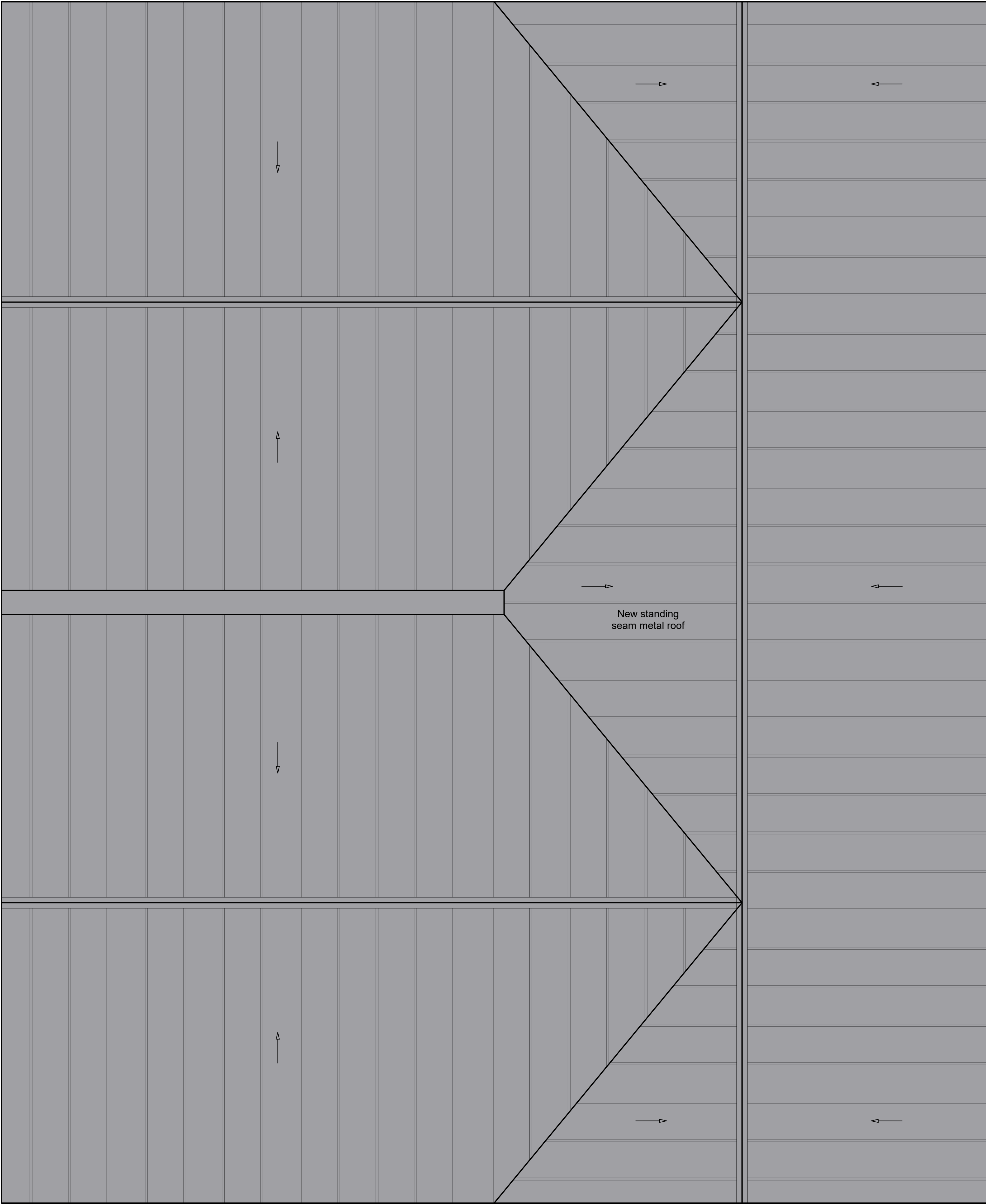
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**HOLFORD ARMS,
KNOCKDOWN**

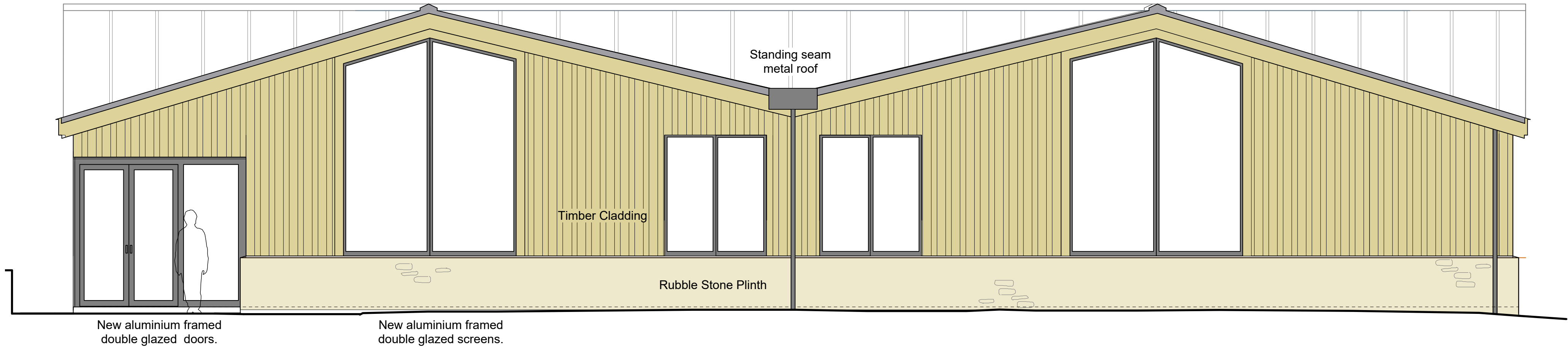
ALTERATIONS

**FUNCTION ROOM PLAN
AS PROPOSED**

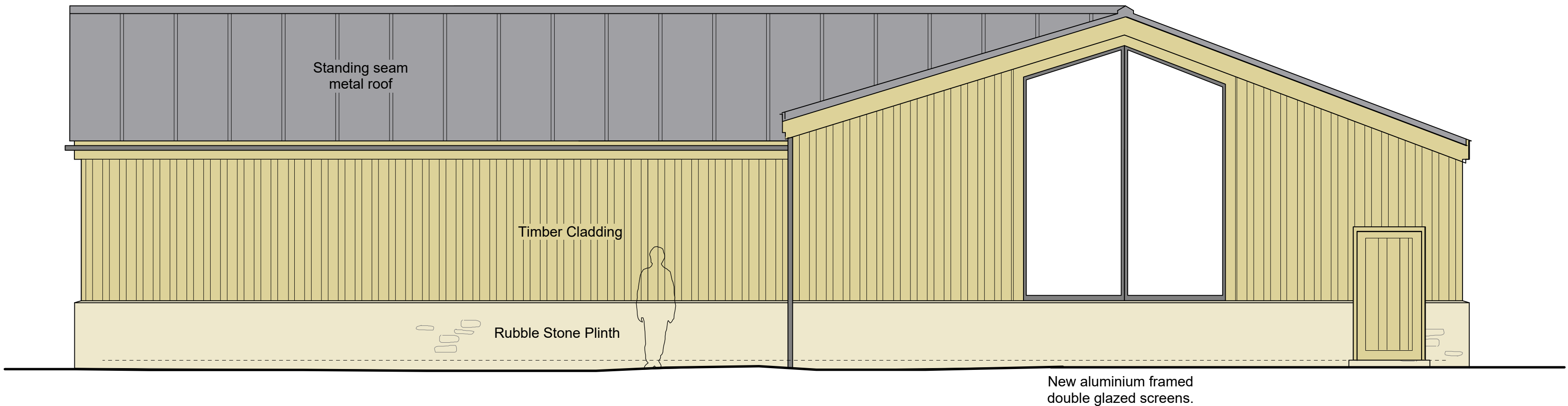
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Date: Nov 2025	
Drawn: DLS	
Size: A1	Revision



Revisions	
VERITY & BEVERLEY ARCHITECTS DESIGNERS The Coach House 4 The Chipping Tetbury Glos. GL8 8ET Telephone 01666 503516 www.verity-beverley.co.uk	
HOLFORD ARMS, KNOCKDOWN ALTERATIONS FUNCTION ROOM ROOF PLAN AS PROPOSED	
Scale: 1:50	25.1598/33
Date: Nov 2025	
Drawn: DLS	
Size: A1	
Revision	



West Elevation



South Elevation

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 M

SCALE MEASUREMENTS SHOWN IN METRES.
ACCURACY OF SCALE CAN ONLY BE ASSURED ON
PROPERLY CALIBRATED MACHINERY

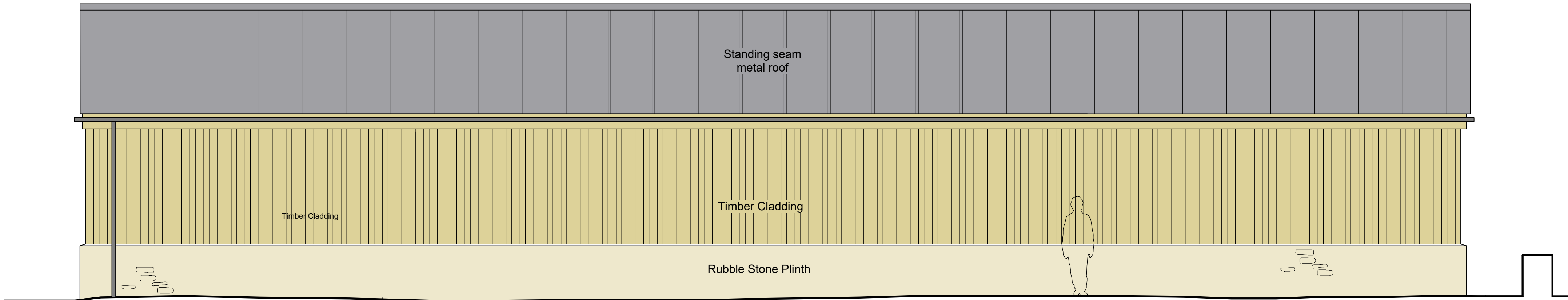
Revisions

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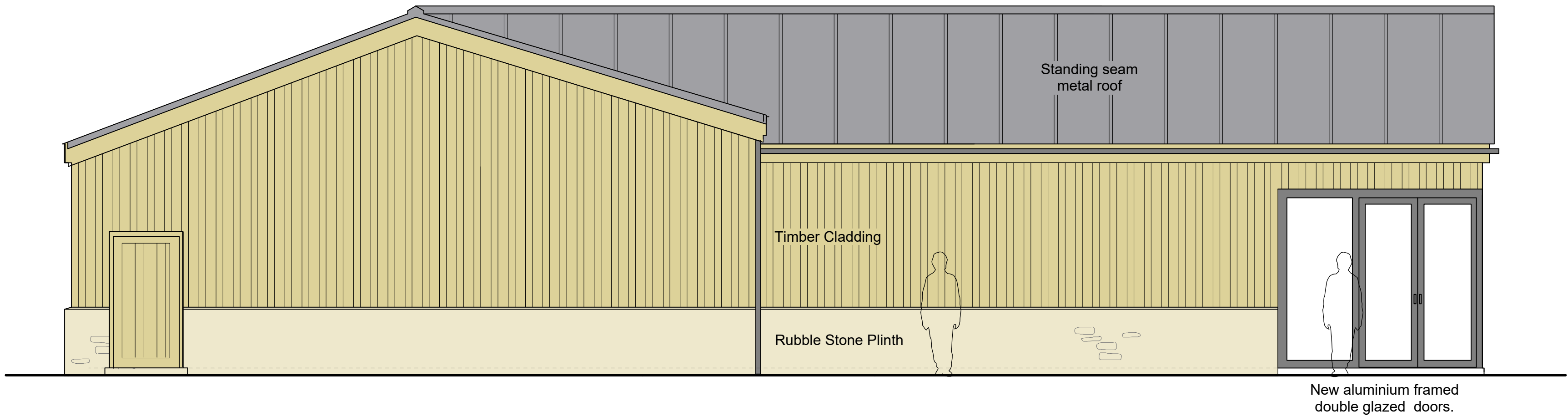
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HOLFORD ARMS,
KNOCKDOWN
ALTERATIONS
FUNCTION ROOM ELEVATIONS
AS PROPOSED 1/2

Scale: 1:50	25.1598/34
Date: Nov 2025	
Drawn: DLS	
Size: A1	
Revision	



East Elevation



North Elevation

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 M
SCALE MEASUREMENTS SHOWN IN METRES.
ACCURACY OF SCALE CAN ONLY BE ASSURED ON
PROPERLY CALIBRATED MACHINERY

Revisions									
VERITY & BEVERLEY ARCHITECTS DESIGNERS The Coach House 4 The Chipping Tetbury Glos. GL8 8ET Telephone 01666 503516 www.verity-beverley.co.uk									
HOLFORD ARMS, KNOCKDOWN ALTERATIONS FUNCTION ROOM ELEVATIONS AS PROPOSED 2/2									
Scale: 1:50									
Date: Nov 2025				25.1598/35					
Drawn: DLS				Revision					
Size: A1									

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EXISTING WINDOWS – PHOTOSHEET

Holford Arms, Knockdown
25.1598

Prepared by
Verity & Beverley Ltd
Architects and Designers

WG01



EXTERNAL



INTERNAL

WG02



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WG03



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WG04



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WS02



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Verity & Beverley Ltd
August 2025

Appendix 3: Planning policy and guidance

Introduction

This assessment has been written within the following legislative, planning policy and guidance context:

- National Heritage Act 1983 (amended 2002);
- Town and Country Planning Act (1990);
- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act (1990);
- National Planning Policy Framework (2025);
- Wiltshire Core Strategy (Adopted 2015);
- Planning Practice Guidance, Historic Environment (2025);
- Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: Note 2 - Managing Significance in Decision-taking in the Historic Environment (Historic England 2015)
- Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: Note 3 - The Setting of Heritage Assets (Historic England 2015);
- Conservation Principles: policies and guidance for the sustainable management of the historic environment (English Heritage 2008);
- ClfA Standard and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment.

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act (1990)

66 General duty as respects listed buildings in exercise of planning functions

(1) In considering whether to grant planning permission [F1 or permission in principle] 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 features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

(2) Without prejudice to section 72, in the exercise of the powers of appropriation, disposal and development (including redevelopment) conferred by the provisions of sections 232, 233 and 235(1) of the principal Act, a local authority shall have regard to the desirability of preserving features of special architectural or historic interest, and in particular, listed buildings.

(3) The reference in subsection (2) to a local authority includes a reference to a joint planning board F

(4) Nothing in this section applies in relation to neighbourhood development orders.

72 General duty as respects conservation areas in exercise of planning functions

(1) In the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, of any [F1 functions under or by virtue of] any of the provisions mentioned in subsection (2), special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

(2) The provisions referred to in subsection (1) are the planning Acts and Part I of the Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953 [F2 and sections 70 and 73 of the Leasehold Reform, Housing and Urban Development Act 1993].

(3) In subsection (2), references to provisions of the Leasehold Reform, Housing and Urban Development Act 1993 include references to those provisions as they have effect by virtue of section 118(1) of the Housing Act 1996.

(4) Nothing in this section applies in relation to neighbourhood development orders.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF; February 2025)

16. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

202. Heritage assets range from sites and buildings of local historic value to those of the highest significance, such as World Heritage Sites which are internationally recognised to be of Outstanding Universal Value. These assets are an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.

203. Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. This strategy should take into account:

- d) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- e) the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;
- f) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and
- g) opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.

204. When considering the designation of conservation areas, local planning authorities should ensure that an area justifies such status because of its special architectural or historic interest, and that the concept of conservation is not devalued through the designation of areas that lack special interest.

205. Local planning authorities should maintain or have access to a historic environment record. This should contain up-to-date evidence about the historic environment in their area and be used to:

- a) assess the significance of heritage assets and the contribution they make to their environment; and
- b) predict the likelihood that currently unidentified heritage assets, particularly sites of historic and archaeological interest, will be discovered in the future.

206. Local planning authorities should make information about the historic environment, gathered as part of policy-making or development management, publicly accessible.

Proposals affecting heritage assets

207. 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.

208. Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

209. Where there is evidence of deliberate neglect of, or damage to, a heritage asset, the deteriorated state of the heritage asset should not be taken into account in any decision.

210. In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

211. In considering any applications to remove or alter a historic statue, plaque, memorial or monument (whether listed or not), local planning authorities should have regard to the importance of their retention in situ and, where appropriate, of explaining their historic and social context rather than removal.

Considering potential impacts

212. 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.

213. Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:

- a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;
- b) 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.

214. Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

- a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and
- b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and
- c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and
- d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.

215. 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.

216. The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

217. Local planning authorities should not permit the loss of the whole or part of a heritage asset without taking all reasonable steps to ensure the new development will proceed after the loss has occurred.

218. Local planning authorities should require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible. However, the ability to record evidence of our past should not be a factor in deciding whether such loss should be permitted.

219. 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.

220. Not all elements of a Conservation Area or World Heritage Site will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 214 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 215, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site as a whole.

221. Local planning authorities should assess whether the benefits of a proposal for enabling development, which would otherwise conflict with planning policies but which would secure the future conservation of a heritage asset, outweigh the disbenefits of departing from those policies.

Planning Policy Guidance (PPG)

Setting

On ‘setting’, the PPG sets out (para. 013 Reference ID: 18a-013-20190723) that “All heritage assets have a setting, irrespective of the form in which they survive and whether they are designated or not. The setting of a heritage asset and the asset’s curtilage may not have the same extent”.

It continues “The extent and importance of setting is often expressed by reference to the visual relationship between the asset and the proposed development and associated visual/physical considerations. Although views of or from an asset will play an important part in the assessment of impacts on setting, the way in which we experience an asset in its setting is also influenced by other environmental factors such as noise, dust, smell and vibration from other land uses in the vicinity, and by our understanding of the historic relationship between places. For example, buildings that are in close proximity but are not visible from each other may have a historic or aesthetic connection that amplifies the experience of the significance of each. The contribution that setting makes to the significance of the heritage asset does not depend on there being public rights of way or an ability to otherwise access or experience that setting. The contribution may vary over time”.

Harm

The PPG sets out further information on the degrees of harm which might result from development affecting a heritage asset (para. 018 Reference ID: 18a-018-20190723). It states “Where potential harm to designated heritage assets is identified, it needs to be categorised as either less than substantial harm or substantial harm (which includes total loss) in order to identify which policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraphs 194-196) apply. Within each category of harm (which category applies should be explicitly identified), the extent of the harm may vary and should be clearly articulated”.

It continues “Whether a proposal causes substantial harm will be a judgment for the decision-maker, having regard to the circumstances of the case and the policy in the National Planning Policy Framework. In general terms, substantial harm is a high test, so it may not arise in many cases. For example, in determining whether works to a listed building constitute substantial harm, an important consideration would be whether the adverse impact seriously affects a key element of its special architectural or historic interest. It is the degree of harm to the asset’s significance rather than the scale of the development that is to be assessed. The harm may arise from works to the asset or from development within its setting. While the impact of total destruction is obvious, partial destruction is likely to have a considerable impact but, depending on the circumstances, it may still be less than substantial harm or conceivably not harmful at all, for example, when removing later additions to historic buildings where those additions are inappropriate and harm the buildings’ significance. Similarly, works that are moderate or minor in scale are likely to cause less than substantial harm or no harm at all. However, even minor works have the potential to cause substantial harm, depending on the nature of their impact on the asset and its setting”.

A further section addresses the concept of harm in a Conservation Area situation (para. 019 Reference ID: 18a-019-20190723). It states that “Paragraph 201 of the National Planning Policy Framework is the starting point. An unlisted building that makes a positive contribution to a conservation area is individually of lesser importance than a listed building. If the building is important or integral to the character or appearance of the conservation area then its proposed demolition is more likely to amount to substantial harm to the conservation area, engaging the tests in paragraph 195 of the National Planning Policy Framework. Loss of a building within a conservation area may alternatively amount to less than substantial harm under paragraph 196. However, the justification for a building’s proposed demolition will still need to be proportionate to its relative significance and its contribution to the significance of the conservation area as a whole. The same principles apply in respect of other elements which make a positive contribution to the significance of the conservation area, such as open spaces”.

Public benefit

An important aspect of the assessment of harm is the identification of public benefit to a proposal which would offset the harm identified. The PPG states (Para 020 Reference ID: 18a-020-20190723) “Public benefits may follow from many developments and could be anything that delivers economic, social or environmental objectives as described in the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 8). Public benefits should flow from the proposed development. They should be of a nature or scale to be of benefit to the public at large and not just be a private benefit. However, benefits do not always have to be visible or accessible to the public in order to be genuine public benefits, for example, works to a listed private dwelling which secure its future as a designated heritage asset could be a public benefit”.

Examples of heritage benefits may include:

- sustaining or enhancing the significance of a heritage asset and the contribution of its setting;

- reducing or removing risks to a heritage asset; or
- securing the optimum viable use of a heritage asset in support of its long-term conservation.

Local planning policy: Wiltshire Core Strategy (Adopted 2015)

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.

Guidance

This assessment has been conducted with reference to guidance documents produced by Historic England since 2008, and, where appropriate, in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Standards and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment (CIfA 2014), as set out below.

Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: Note 2 - Managing Significance in Decision-taking in the Historic Environment

The GPA note advises a 6-stage approach to the identification of the significance of a heritage asset and the potential effects on its significance resulting from any development.

The significance of a heritage asset is the sum of its archaeological, architectural, historic, and artistic interest. A variety of terms are used in designation criteria (for example outstanding universal value for world heritage sites, national importance for Scheduled Monuments and special interest for Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas), but all of these refer to a heritage asset's significance.

The list of Steps is set out below, however the GPA does add "...it is good practice to check individual stages of this list, but they may not be appropriate in all cases and the level of detail applied should be proportionate. For example, where significance and/or impact are relatively low, as will be the case in many applications, only a few paragraphs of information might be needed, but if significance and impact are high then much more information may be necessary".

The recommended Steps are as follows:

1. Understand the significance of the affected assets;
2. Understand the impact of the proposal on that significance;
3. Avoid, minimise and mitigate impact in a way that meets the objectives of the NPPF;
4. Look for opportunities to better reveal or enhance significance;
5. Justify any harmful impacts in terms of the sustainable development objective of conserving significance and the need for change; and
6. Offset negative impacts on aspects of significance by enhancing others through recording, disseminating and archiving archaeological and historical interest of the important elements of the heritage assets affected.

Regarding the application process, the GPA offers the following advice: “Understanding the nature of the significance is important to understanding the need for and best means of conservation. For example, a modern building of high architectural interest will have quite different sensitivities from an archaeological site where the interest arises from the possibility of gaining new understanding of the past.

Understanding the extent of that significance is also important because this can, among other things, lead to a better understanding of how adaptable the asset may be and therefore improve viability and the prospects for long term conservation.

Understanding the level of significance is important as it provides the essential guide to how the policies should be applied. This is intrinsic to decision-taking where there is unavoidable conflict with other planning objectives”.

Regarding the assessment of the significance of a heritage asset, the GPA also states that the “...reason why society places a value on heritage assets beyond their mere utility has been explored at a more philosophical level by English Heritage in Conservation Principles (2008). Conservation Principles identifies four types of heritage value that an asset may hold: aesthetic, communal, historic and evidential value. This is simply another way of analysing its significance. Heritage values can help in deciding the most efficient and effective way of managing the heritage asset to sustain its overall value to society”.

For the purposes of this assessment and in line with Conservation Principles, the assessment of significance will include an assessment of a heritage asset’s communal value.

Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: Note 3 - The Setting of Heritage Assets

GPA note 3. expands on the six stages outlined in GPA Note 2, as set out above.

Step 1: identifying the heritage assets affected and their settings

The starting point of any assessment is the identification of those heritage assets likely to be affected by the proposed development. For this purpose, if the proposed development is seen to be capable of affecting the contribution of a heritage asset’s setting to its significance or the appreciation of its significance, it can be considered as falling within the asset’s setting.

Step 2: Assessing whether, how and to what degree these settings contribute to the significance of the heritage asset(s)

This Step provides a checklist of the potential attributes of a setting that it may be appropriate to consider defining its contribution to the asset’s heritage values and significance. Only a limited

selection of the possible attributes listed below is likely to be important in terms of any single asset.

The asset's physical surroundings

- Topography;
- Other heritage assets (including buildings, structures, landscapes, areas or archaeological remains);
- Definition, scale and 'grain' of surrounding streetscape, landscape and spaces;
- Formal design;
- Historic materials and surfaces;
- Land use;
- Green space, trees and vegetation;
- Openness, enclosure and boundaries;
- Functional relationships and communications;
- History and degree of change over time;
- Integrity; and
- Issues such as soil chemistry and hydrology.

Experience of the asset

- Surrounding landscape or townscape character;
- Views from, towards, through, across and including the asset;
- Visual dominance, prominence or role as focal point;
- Intentional intervisibility with other historic and natural features;
- Noise, vibration and other pollutants or nuisances;
- Tranquillity, remoteness, 'wildness';
- Sense of enclosure, seclusion, intimacy or privacy;
- Dynamism and activity;
- Accessibility, permeability and patterns of movement;
- Degree of interpretation or promotion to the public;
- The rarity of comparable survivals of setting;
- The asset's associative attributes;
- Associative relationships between heritage assets;
- Cultural associations;
- Celebrated artistic representations; and
- Traditions.

Step 3: Assessing the effect of the proposed development on the significance of the asset(s)

The third stage of the analysis is to identify the range of effects that any Proposed Development may have on setting(s), and to evaluate the resultant degree of harm or benefit to the significance of the heritage asset(s).

The following checklist sets out the potential attributes of any proposed development which may affect setting, and thus its implications for the significance of the heritage asset. Only a limited selection of these is likely to be particularly important in terms of development.

Location and siting of development

- Proximity to asset;
- Extent;
- Position in relation to landform;
- Degree to which location will physically or visually isolate asset; and

- Position in relation to key views.

The form and appearance of the development

- Prominence, dominance, or conspicuousness;
- Competition with or distraction from the asset;
- Dimensions, scale and massing;
- Proportions;
- Visual permeability (extent to which it can be seen through);
- Materials (texture, colour, reflectiveness, etc);
- Architectural style or design;
- Introduction of movement or activity; and
- Diurnal or seasonal change.

Other effects of the development

- Change to built surroundings and spaces;
- Change to skyline;
- Noise, odour, vibration, dust, etc.;
- Lighting effects and ‘light spill’;
- Change to general character (e.g. suburbanising or industrialising);
- Changes to public access, use or amenity;
- Changes to land use, land cover, tree cover;
- Changes to archaeological context, soil chemistry, or hydrology; and
- Changes to communications/accessibility/permeability.

Permanence of the development

- Anticipated lifetime/temporariness;
- Recurrence; and
- Reversibility.

Longer term or consequential effects of the development

- Changes to ownership arrangements;
- Economic and social viability; and
- Communal use and social viability.

Step 4: Maximising enhancement and minimising harm

Enhancement may be achieved by actions including:

- removing or re-modelling an intrusive building or feature;
- replacement of a detrimental feature by a new and more harmonious one;
- restoring or revealing a lost historic feature or view;
- introducing a wholly new feature that adds to the public appreciation of the asset;
- introducing new views (including glimpses or better framed views) that add to the public experience of the asset; or
- improving public access to, or interpretation of, the asset including its setting

Options for reducing the harm arising from development may include the relocation of a development or its elements, changes to its design, the creation of effective long-term visual or acoustic screening, or management measures secured by planning conditions or legal agreements.

Step 5: Making and documenting the decision and monitoring outcomes

Step 5 identifies the desirability of making and documenting the decision-making process and monitoring outcomes.

For the purposes of this assessment Stages 1 to 3 have been followed, with Stage 4 forming, if/where appropriate, part of the recommendations.

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists: Standard and guidance for historic environment desk-based assessment (published December 2014; updated January 2017; updated October 2020)

This heritage statement has also been completed in line with guidance issued by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA). Armour Heritage is enrolled with the CIfA as a corporate entity and is recognised as a CIfA Registered Organisation.

This document has been completed in line with the CIfA Standard, as set out in the aforementioned document, which states: “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. Desk-based assessment will be undertaken using appropriate methods and practices which satisfy the stated aims of the project, and which comply with the Code of conduct and other relevant regulations of CIfA. In a development context desk-based assessment will establish the impact of the proposed development on the significance of the historic environment (or will identify the need for further evaluation to do so) and will enable reasoned proposals and decisions to be made whether to mitigate, offset or accept without further intervention that impact”.



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