

Outline Structural Condition Report & Schedule of Works

Front Barn At Westfield
Farm, Ermin Street,
Latton, Wilts, GL7 5QQ

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1.0 Introduction

The building fabric of the Grade II Listed, front barn, at Westfield Farm is currently observed as a building that could become 'at risk' by Wiltshire County Council.

A recent request has been made for a structural appraisal of the building, and a proposed schedule of works for repair.

The building was visited by the author and examined on the 17th March 2026.

The front barn building is in very poor condition, with the roof structure and first floor structure in a particularly significant state of decay.

Partial collapse of several localised elements of the building has occurred, resulting in a building that is now considered to be very fragile, thus making a full and detailed structural fabric survey of the interior of the building a dangerous proposition.

Accordingly, this structural appraisal report must be considered an outline examination of the visual condition of the building, until fallen fabric and perched fabric is stabilised or locally removed.

The purpose of this report is however to determine the current form and condition of each element of the structure of the building as far as is safely possible, and to outline methods of repair commensurate with preservation and retention of as much of the existing building fabric as possible, using appropriate and relevant techniques and materials.

The author is a Chartered Structural Engineer with 45 years' experience in design of new, and assessment of historic building structures, such as churches, agricultural buildings, historic houses and the like, and is a Member of The Institution of Structural Engineers.

2.0 Instructions

Instructions were received from Fowler Architecture and Planning by email, and were to carry out a visual structural condition survey of the building.

3.0 Site Work

A full visual survey of the building was made on the 17th March 2026.

The condition of the building was assessed, including roof structure, external walls and ground floor.

Photographic records of the fabric were taken, some of which are included in this report for reference purposes.

4.0 Disclaimer

This report has been prepared for the benefit of Fowler Architecture and Planning and their Clients, therefore copyright of this report rests with them.

You should also note that this report is a written record of a visual structural inspection carried out by the author.

This report is not intended to be a fully detailed fabric survey and description of the property as would be carried out by a Chartered Surveyor which will also include non-structural matters, such as boilers, windows, and decorations.

This report is also not a valuation survey.

No liability for the contents of this report is conveyed to any third party, and no third party should therefore rely on the contents of this report.

Unless specifically stated otherwise, this report has been carried out visually without the fabric of the building being exposed or opened up.

Where the fabric of the building has been visually examined, no opinion about any hidden or concealed structure or guarantee as to its condition can be given.

When comments are expressed about the external fabric of the building, observation has been carried out from viewing from ground level.

No testing or enquiries as to the presence of or susceptibility to pollution contamination, radiation, methane, radon and toxic mould, fungus or spore or other hazardous substances has been carried out.

You should also note that liability to you, whether in contract or tort, shall not exceed the amount, if any, recoverable by way of indemnity insurance taken out by us at the time we received instructions from you.

5.0 Findings

5.1 Building

The building appears to date from early 19th Century.

The building is currently shrouded with scaffold to wall faces and roof surface and polythene sheeting, thus affording reasonable weather protection.

The ground floor perimeter is protected with mesh fencing prohibiting access.

Viewing of the building interior is only safely possible from the upper stage of scaffold, viewing from the perimeter inwards and downwards.

Access within the building is not safely possible at all.

The building is of rectangular shape in plan, the structure is of limestone rubble external walls, with notable stone curved and shallow pitch arches on the front (south) elevation.

The mid-floor is constructed of timber primary beams and joists.

The upper roof is formed of A frame roof trusses, purlins and common rafters, supporting a heavy stone slate roof covering of duo pitch roof form.

A lean – to exists on the rear (North) side, of timber roof trusses and modern rendered concrete blockwork walls.



General Current View of Building Front Elevation



Historic View of Building Front Elevation – Circa 2018 (Internet Search)



Historic View of Building Front Elevation – Circa 1987 (Internet Search)

The fabric of the building can be described in more detail as follows.

5.2 Roof

The roof covering of the building is of heavy limestone dressed stone slate, resting on timber common rafters, these are supported on timber purlins, which span lengthways along the building, between and are supported by timber A frame cross trusses, at regular intervals, which span across the building front to back.



General View of Current Roof Structure – Photograph Taken From East Gable Looking West



View of Mid – Section of The Roof – Showing Deformed and Partially Collapsed State of The Roof Fabric – Note The Dislodged ‘Rivers’ of Stone Slates



View of Eastern End Section of Roof – Note Missing (Collapsed) Roof Slates, Rafters and Purlins

The roof A frames are of 7 bays, with an additional short bay between the farm house and western barn gable wall, where there is a narrow through passage.

Perhaps only 20% of the roof covering, is intact and in place, the remainder dislodged, loose or fallen.

The stone slate roof covering, common rafters and purlins are missing totally in the two eastern bays and the last western bay at the junction with the farm house, thus three out of seven bays are missing and have fallen onto the first floor.

From the last photograph, the elemental form of the typical roof truss can be seen – this being the two principle rafters and tie beam forming the triangulated A frame, the two lower queen struts under the lower purlin mortices, and the upper collar mid-way between the purlin mortices.

At high level, the ridge one sided mortice joint allows the principles to be connected.

The purlins are 150 wide x 200 deep and the small common rafters run over the top face..

The majority of the roof that can be seen is in poor condition, the effects of weather and exposure are visibly apparent. The principle rafters are visibly misaligned out of plane, and the purlins sagging.

It is likely that not only repair but strengthening too of the existing remaining timber members will be required, before the roof can safely again support the proposed stone slate roof covering.

Possible repair and strengthening strategies will be discussed later in this report.

5.3 Walls

The walls to the building are of limestone rubble, some 450mm – 550mm thick at both floor levels.

There is some evidence of vertical and stepped cracking caused by historic foundation movements.

Ivy and undergrowth externally obscures much of the wall surface, making accurate and complete survey impossible.



General View of Eastern Gable Wall – Note Vertical Cracking

The stone arches at the front elevation appear to have withstood weathering quite well, however there is some slight sign of dropping, but not serious.

Generally, the majority of the walls are intact and more or less plumb.

5.4 First Floor

The floor is perhaps the least visible element of the building.

It can be seen that the floor is built of long span timber cross beams, built into the outside walls with timber joists spanning the lengthwise direction of the building between the beams.

Fallen roof debris and timber first floor walls have collapsed onto the first floor structure and caused overload and damage, either in the form of destruction of the beams and joists or severe deformation.

This element of the building requires clearance before any meaningful assessment can be made.



General View of Eastern Section Of Floor – Note Collapsed Beam and Missing Joists

6.0 Recommendations & Outline Method Statement

6.1 Clearing Debris and Making Safe

In my opinion, the building needs to be cleared of fallen material, and material that might fall, before any meaningful further detailed fabric survey work can be completed.

This is most likely achievable by removing the vertical polythene side sheeting at the front of the building and using a cherry picker access platform to remove loose stone slates, and dangerously loose timbers from the roof structure to prevent them from falling.

Once this has been completed and the principle roof structure stabilised by strapping or bracing, the internal first floor can then be tackled in a similar fashion to make it safe for inspection.

Once the roof and first floor structures are made safe, safe access and inspection can proceed. Once this is completed this report can then be updated to record in detail the complete fabric.

This will then enable a detailed schedule of repairs to be established and presented for agreement with the Local Authority Conservation Planning Team..

6.1 Likely Repair Techniques

The author is well versed and experienced in appropriate specification of repairs to such buildings.

The repair of this historic building will be required to adopt retention of all possible existing fabric, including common rafters, purlins, A frames, floor beams and the like.

These elements may also require strengthening to meet modern standards and strength/stiffness levels.

Possible repair techniques will involve prior careful assessment, recording, analysis and presentation.

These will follow, timber pairing in the form of new matched species common rafters of similar size to existing timbers, strengthening of purlins and/or timber splicing repairs of the A frames.

Timber splicing, steel plating or flitching may also be required to be adopted at joints.

Typical envisaged repairs of the following types are noted below;



Possible Repair By Splicing of Timber Rafters and Purlins To Existing Members



Possible Repair by Flitch Plate at Joints



Possible Repair By Scarfing In of New Timber



Possible Strengthening Of Beams By Steel Flitching



Possible Repair By Insertion of Local Bracketry

SIGNED

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'N. Challis', with a long horizontal stroke underneath.

Date: 28th March 2026

N. CHALLIS BEng (Hons) CEng MStructE