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HERITAGE STATEMENT

In respect of
Praters Farm, Sherston, Malmesbury, SN16 0PS

On behalf of
James Wood

AHC REF: PM/10468

Date: June 2026

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CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION & SCOPE OF REPORT	4
Heritage designations & considerations	4
Recent planning history	5
Methodology	5
Assessment	6
2.0 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND & DESCRIPTION	7
Historical background	7
Description	10
3.0 ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE	13
Intrinsic interest	13
The settings of nearby heritage assets	14
Praters Farmhouse and converted barn – both Grade II	15
Home Farmhouse and outbuildings to north-west - (both Grade II)	17
The Sherston Conservation Area	18
4.0 THE APPLICATION PROPOSALS & THE HERITAGE ISSUES.....	20
Recent planning history	20
The application proposals	21
The heritage issues	21
5.0 CONCLUSION	23
PLATES	24
APPENDIX 1	41

FIGURES (integrated into the text)

- Fig.1: Tithe map accompanying the 1843 apportionment for Sherston Magna. The approximate application site boundaries have been highlighted in red
- Fig.2: 1885 1:2500 scale OS map. The approximate application site boundaries have been highlighted in red
- Fig.3: 1948 OS aerial image. The approximate application site boundaries have been highlighted in red
- Fig.4: Location plan accompanying the 1974 application, ref.N/74/00858 (north is to the top right)
- Fig.5: Wiltshire Council plan showing the boundaries of the Sherston Conservation Area closest to the application Site. The approximate application site boundaries have been highlighted in red

PLATES (collated at the end – all date from March 2026, except plates 10, 13, 14, 17, & 18 which date from June 2026)

- Plate 1: General view south-eastwards across the application site
- Plate 2: Thick planting on the north-eastern application site boundary
- Plate 3: Thick planting on the north-eastern application site boundary
- Plate 4: Thick planting on the south-western application site boundary (right)
- Plate 5: View from the application site towards houses on Easton Town
- Plate 6: The garden boundary of Easton Town Cottage at the northern corner of the application site
- Plate 7: Boundary wall to the south-west of the listed converted barn; note the partial straight joints, which appear to describe an infilled opening but do not continue to the full height of the wall, suggesting the upper element has been rebuilt

Plate 8:	Drystone wall on the south-eastern site boundary
Plate 9:	Drystone wall on the south-eastern site boundary, with corrugated roof of outbuilding outside site boundaries visible over
Plate 10:	Orchard, garden, and outbuilding to the south of the listed barn
Plate 11:	Listed barn seen across the orchard to the south
Plate 12:	The western end of Praters Farmhouse
Plate 13:	Praters Farmhouse from within its garden to the south
Plate 14:	Praters Farmhouse and the barn seen across the garden to the south (the application site is located beyond the tall tree boundary visible behind the barn to the right)
Plate 15:	The south-western elevation of the barn, from the orchard located between the barn and the application site; note the visible elevation of the midstreys has been rebuilt
Plate 16:	Looking towards the application site from the orchard to the south-west of the listed barn; the area of the application site visible in this image is not proposed for development under the indicative site layout
Plate 17:	The south-western elevation of Praters Farmhouse, from the garden located between the farmhouse and the application site
Plate 18:	The application site boundary from in front of the south-western elevation of Praters Farmhouse
Plate 19:	Praters Farmhouse from the road
Plate 20:	Praters Farmhouse and barn from the road access
Plate 21:	Looking south-eastwards along the road from outside Praters Farm
Plate 22:	Home Farm from the road
Plate 23:	Paddock on the northern side of the road, opposite the access to Praters Farm
Plate 24:	Easton Town Cottage, immediately to the north-west of Praters Farmhouse, with development on Easton Town visible beyond
Plate 25:	Residential development along Easton Town
Plate 26:	Access to the garden of Easton Town Cottage from Easton Town; the application site is to the right
Plate 27:	View along Easton Town; the application site is located beyond the shed towards the centre of the image
Plate 28:	Looking directly towards the application site from Easton Town
Plate 29:	Houses on the northern side of Easton Town sit directly opposite the application site
Plate 30:	Modern housing (right) to the south-west of the application site; the application site is situated beyond the planted boundary visible towards the centre of this image
Plate 31:	The south-western elevation of the barn; note the rebuilding of the upper element
Plate 32:	Home Farmhouse and its listed outbuilding from the road
Plate 33:	The listed outbuilding at Home Farm from the road
Plate 34:	View from the road into the field parcel to the south-west of the application site, looking towards open countryside to the south (the application site is located beyond the thick planted boundary to the left)

Appendix 1: Relevant statutory list entries

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1.0 INTRODUCTION & SCOPE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report has been prepared and written by Patrick C. Maguire, IHBC, Director at Asset Heritage Consulting Ltd., on behalf of James Wood in order to provide an independent assessment of the impact in built heritage terms (below-ground archaeology falls outside the scope of this assessment) of the proposals affecting the site at Praters Farm, Sherston.

Heritage designations & considerations

- 1.2 The application site is an enclosed, grassed area located to the south-west of Praters Farm, having been formed out of an earlier, larger field parcel to the south-west in the 20th century. To the north-east are the two listed buildings of Praters Farm, the listed barn (converted and heavily altered in the 20th century) and farmhouse, both listed at Grade II (see statutory list entries at **Appendix 1**). A boundary wall sits between the site and the listed barn.
- 1.3 To the east/south-east of the site, well separated from it, are the listed Home Farmhouse and its outbuildings (both listed at Grade II). While these listed buildings will clearly not be affected by the proposals, they are considered in this report simply because their settings were raised as a concern in an objection submitted on behalf of their owners on the previous application affecting this site (ref.PL/2025/08695). Strangely, that objection including a photograph into the site which appears to have been taken either with a camera raised over the boundary wall or from the roof of an outbuilding located some distance from those listed buildings, close to the south-eastern corner of the application site boundary.
- 1.4 To the south-west, also well separated from the site, is the Sherston Conservation Area, the nearest boundaries of which are located to the east of Easton Square, and coming a little further along Easton Town (road) as far as No.32. These are well separated from the site by the intervening field parcel, by the road, and on the southern side of the road by intervening modern development at Easton Square. Again, on the previous application affecting the site, the setting of this heritage asset was raised as an issue in objections prepared on behalf of the owners of Home Farmhouse.

- 1.5 However, it is clear from the Council's handling of the previous application, that officers were not of the view that either Home Farmhouse, its listed outbuilding, or the conservation area would have been affected by the principle of development of the application site for five houses. I agree with this view.

Recent planning history

- 1.6 As noted above, an application was submitted in 2025 for permission in principle for the development of the site for five houses (ref.PL/2025/08695). This was refused planning permission in December 2025, with the Council's Refusal Reason 3 relating to perceived harm to the significance of Praters Farmhouse and its associated barn (both Grade II) through the introduction of five dwellings, described as 'suburban' (albeit the application was for permission in principle, so there is no reason that the detailed layout and design would necessarily have resulted in a suburban form of development) within the application site.
- 1.7 As also described above, the Council did not identify any harm to the Sherston Conservation Area or the listed buildings of Home Farm through the proposals to develop the site for five houses.
- 1.8 Seeking to address officer concerns on the previous scheme, this revised application proposes a smaller development of only three houses, set closer to the street frontage and away from listed buildings of Praters Farm.

Methodology

- 1.9 With this in mind, this report falls into two distinct parts: the first sets out the historical background to the site and its surroundings and focuses on assessing the significance of the site in its current form, especially in terms its contribution to the significance of nearby heritage assets as part of their settings.
- 1.10 As such, this report complies with the requirements of paragraph 207 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the onus it places on those planning changes to historic assets to include a clear description of the significance of the assets affected, albeit that the requirement in the NPPF is only such that, *'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'.

- 1.11 This second part of the report, which should be read in conjunction with the application drawings, focuses on an assessment of the application scheme and the impact of the proposals in heritage terms.
- 1.12 This two-stage approach of understanding 'significance' before moving on to assess the impact of potential change on that 'significance' has for some time been regarded as good conservation practice in the design and application process (see, for instance, English Heritage's, now Historic England's, 'Conservation Principles', 2008) and, following the introduction of the short-lived PPS5 in 2010 and the NPPF in 2012 (and its more recent iterations), is now effectively a standard requirement for most applications affecting heritage assets.

Assessment

- 1.13 As will be clear from the discussion in the main body of the report, I am not of the view that the proposals would result in harm to the identified heritage assets.
- 1.14 As such, the proposals are consistent with both local and national policy on the conservation and enhancement of the historic built environment, including the guidance set out in the NPPF and its accompanying PPG and, most importantly of all in heritage planning terms, pass the statutory test set by Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

2.0 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND & DESCRIPTION

Historical background

- 2.1 The application site is a grassed parcel of land, formed out of part of a historic field parcel through the formation of a new, planted southern boundary in the second half of the 20th century. It is located to the south-west of Praters Farmhouse, which has its origins in the early 17th century as a farmhouse set at right angles to the road. The threshing barn to the south-west of the farmhouse also has its origins in the 17th or 18th century, although it has been heavily altered in the 20th century, including the rebuilding of the midstreys and the infilling of their cart openings and reconstruction of the roof. The buildings of Home Farm to the east/south-east of the application site also have their origins in the 17th century.
- 2.2 Historically, Praters Farm and Home Farm formed part of the hamlet of Easton Town. This comprised farms and houses along the road, situated between Sherston (a borough by the 15th century) to the south-west and Pinkney Park to the north-east (the seat of the influential Estcourt family; the house there was demolished in the 1950s).



Fig.1. Tithe map accompanying the 1843 apportionment for Sherston Magna. The approximate application site boundaries have been highlighted in red

- 2.3 The tithe map for Sherston Magna (**Fig.1**), which is accompanied by an apportionment of 1843, shows the application site as part of a larger field parcel, which as well as the site possibly included both what is now the garden to the south-west of Praters Farmhouse (albeit a dotted line and field tie suggests some sort of boundary existing to the north-east of the application site) and an open space running up to a field drive to south-west. This track can be seen more clearly on later OS maps, e.g. the 1881 1:2500 OS map (**Fig.2**), where is shown running from the road to the west, before turning north-eastwards and running through the south-eastern end of the application site, approaching a yard to the south of the threshing barn to Praters Farmhouse.

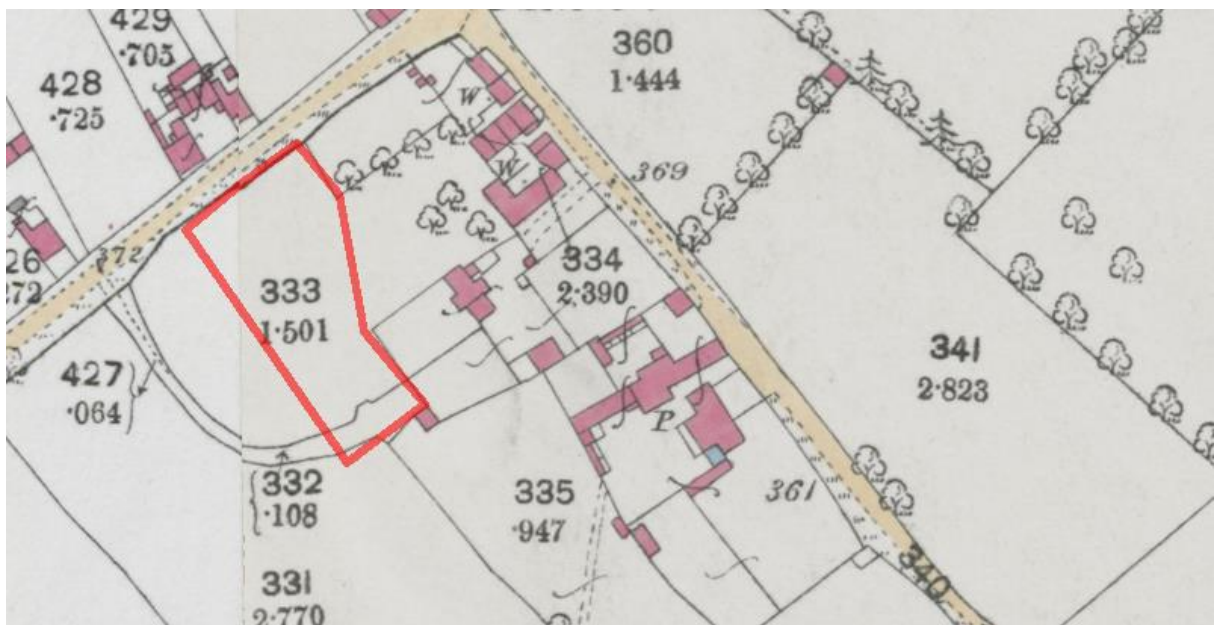


Fig.2. 1885 1:2500 scale OS map. The approximate application site boundaries have been highlighted in red

- 2.4 This track still exists in an altered form, it now continuing further to the south-east before turning to approach Home Farmhouse (rather than Praters Farm as it did historically) from the south; however, this is a late 20th-century change, presumably as a result of the laying out of the application site boundaries and changes in ownership. The tithe map of the early 1840s confirms that the larger field parcel containing the application site (numbered '552' on the tithe map at **Fig.1**) as well as the field parcel to the south of Home Farm (numbered '551') were in the same ownership and occupation as Praters Farm at that time (owner John Hatherell, occupier Benjamin Mills). The large field parcel to the south of the field drive, number '550' on the tithe map, was in the same ownership and

occupation as Home Farmhouse (William Hillier was owner and occupier), which also had fields on the northern side of road (e.g. '555', '556', and '557'). At the corner of the road, parcel '553' including Easton Town Cottage was in the separate ownership of William Thompson and the occupation of Jane Eyres.



Fig.3. 1948 OS aerial image. The approximate application site boundaries have been highlighted in red

- 2.5 The main changes in the vicinity during the course of the 20th century were the increased development along Easton Town, including further development on the northern side of the road and the Easton Square development to the south-west in the first half of the century. On and immediately around the application site, the 1948 OS aerial image (**Fig.3**) shows much the same arrangement as existed in the late 19th century, including the farm drive approaching Praters from the south.
- 2.6 Indeed, this suggests a distinct access to the house, yard, and gardens from the road to the north and a separate field access to the yard and barn from the south. During the second half of the 20th century, this access was lost (re-drawn to serve the field parcel to the south-east, now in the same ownership as Home Farmhouse) and the existing boundaries of the application site were drawn up.

The site plan (**Fig.4**) accompanying the 1974 planning application for the conversion of the threshing barn to use as a photographer's studio (ref.N/74/00858) indicates that the boundary between the site and farmhouse garden was in place by that stage but the south-western site boundary was not. This arrangement can also be seen on an undated aerial photograph in the Council's 1999 Sherston Conservation Area Appraisal (p.13, not reproduced).

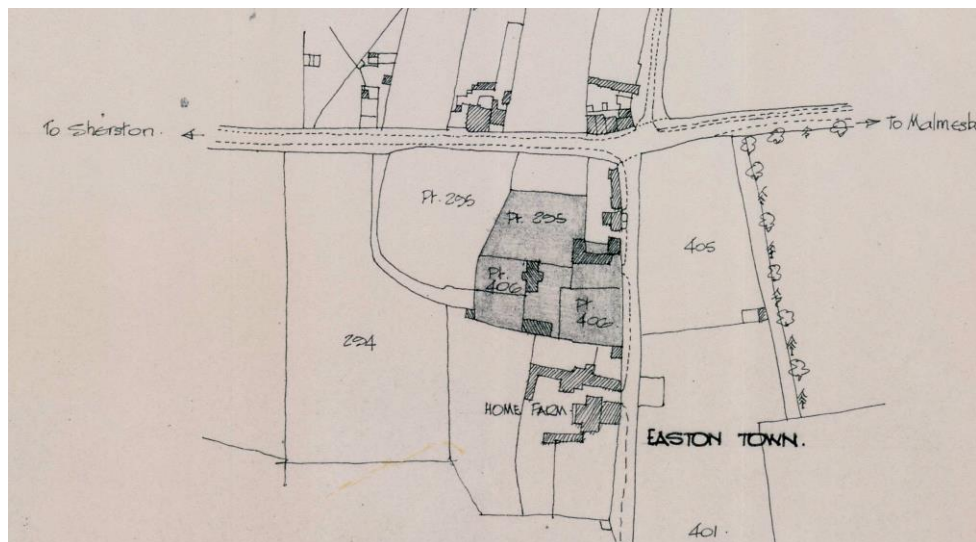


**Fig.4. Location plan accompanying the 1974 application,
ref.N/74/00858 (north is to the top right)**

Description

- 2.7 The application site is a grassed field parcel on the south-eastern side of Easton Town (road) (**plate 1**). As set out under the heading 'Historic Background' above, the extent of the site relates to late 20th-century interventions, including the formation of extensive planting between the site and the farmhouse garden to the north-east (**plates 2 & 3** – possibly following an earlier boundary, see 1843 tithe map at **Fig.1** above) and the formation of the planted south-western site boundary. The field drive that historically turned through the south-eastern end of the site to approach Praters Farm has been re-routed to approach Home Farm from the south-west instead. The south-western site boundary comprises extensive tree planting (**plate 4**). To the north-west, houses on Easton Town (road) can be seen from the site over the roadside boundary wall (**plate 5**), while in the northern corner of the site there is a substantial sycamore tree, with a further stone wall marking the historic boundary between the field parcel and the garden of Easton Town Cottage (**plate 6**).

- 2.8 Part of the north-eastern site boundary is a substantial drystone wall between the site and listed threshing barn. The relates to a boundary in place by at least 1843 (tithe map at **Fig.1** above). The placement of this wall now seems strange, as it would have blocked access to the southern midstrete from the fields but it makes more sense in the context of the since-removed field drive, which approached the barn from a point to the south-east of this wall. Partial straight joints may indicate an infilled opening but, if so, the upper part of the wall has been rebuilt (**plate 7**).
- 2.9 At the south-eastern end of the site, planting and a drystone wall separate the site from the field parcel to the south of Home Farm (**plate 8**). At least part of that boundary is modern (e.g. note the extent of the application site as shown on the 1948 aerial image at **Fig.3** above) and, as such, at least part of the wall must be of the late 20th century. The corrugated roof of a shed on the other side of the boundary can be seen from within the site, although Home Farm and its listed outbuildings are located some distance to the east and are not visible from within the site (**plate 9**).
- 2.10 To the north-east of the site is Praters Farmhouse, which now forms a domestic curtilage which includes the former threshing barn (heavily altered, re-roofed, and converted into an ancillary photography studio in the 1970s), outbuildings, and areas of garden (**plates 10-14**). An area of orchard and garden sits between the listed threshing barn and the application site (**plates 15 & 16**). A further area of garden is located between the western end of Praters Farmhouse and the heavily-planted boundary of the application site (**plates 17 & 18**).
- 2.11 From the road to the north-east, Praters Farm is experienced in the form of its high boundary wall, with the farmhouse set behind this, close to but at right angles to the road, except for its annexe which forms part of the roadside boundary (**plates 19 & 20**). The barn, particularly the roof, can also be seen when looking into Praters Farm from the road, but the application site behind cannot, other than in the form the substantial planting on its north-eastern boundary seen over the barn. The high boundary wall, set behind a grassed verge, carries on south-eastwards along the road, eventually forming the roadside boundary of Home Farm beyond (**plates 21 & 22**). On the north-eastern side of the road are open fields and paddocks, historically associated with Home Farm (**plate 23**).

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- 2.12 Immediately to the north-west of Praters Farm and coming up to the junction with Easton Town (road), there is a more residential character, with Easton Town Cottage fronting directly onto the road and built-up development located around the junction (**plates 24 & 25**). From the junction, the garden boundary wall and access to Easton Town Cottage lines the south-eastern side of the road (**plate 26**) and the application site can be seen beyond, principally in the form of the sycamore tree at its northern corner and roadside planting (**plate 27**). The site is visible from the road in the form of its drystone boundary wall and planting within the site (**plate 28**). It sits directly opposite houses on the northern side of Easton Town (road) (**plate 29**). To the south-west of the site, an open field parcel sits between it and the 20th-century development at Easton Square (**plate 30**).

3.0 ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

3.1 The purpose of this section of the report is to assess the significance of the application site in built heritage terms, principally in relation to the contribution that it makes to the significance of nearby heritage assets as part of their setting. This will provide a 'baseline' against which the application proposals can be assessed at Section 4.0.

3.2 As it relates to setting, this approach draws on the suggested methodology set out in the relevant Historic England guidance, 'The Setting of Heritage Assets: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3' (2nd edition; December 2017) (hereafter, 'GPA3'), with this section of the report incorporating Steps 1 & 2 of that methodology, '*identify which heritage assets and their settings are affected*' and, '*assess the degree to which these settings and views make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s) or allow significance to be appreciated*'.

Intrinsic interest

3.3 The application site is a grassed parcel of land, its existing extent defined in the late 20th century. Built form on the site is limited to dry-stone boundary walls to the north-west (roadside) and parts of the north-eastern and south-eastern boundaries. These walls all appear to be in a good condition and their dates are unclear; at least parts of the south-eastern boundary are demonstrably modern as they relate to part of a boundary that did not exist until the late 20th century.

3.4 These are attractive, traditional walls but not, in my view, of sufficient interest to be of material significance in their own right.

3.5 I note that in its written objection on behalf of the owners of Home Farmhouse to application ref.PL/2025/08695, Pegasus Group raised the possibility that the roadside boundary wall might be considered listed by virtue of curtilage through its relationship with Praters Farmhouse. In the determination of that application, the Council did not indicate agreement with that view.

- 3.6 Of course, as set out in the Historic England's 'Listed Buildings and Curtilage: Historic England Advice Note 10' (June 2025), *'It will be for the local planning authority to reach a conclusion as to whether or not buildings are within a particular curtilage, and ultimately a matter for the court to determine if that decision is thought unreasonable'* (p.4).
- 3.7 I agree with the Council's position on this matter as demonstrated through the determination of the recent application. While the roadside boundary wall may pre-date 1948 (the boundary certainly pre-dates 1948 but the wall may well have been rebuilt since then) and has historically been in the same ownership as Praters Farmhouse, it does not, in my view, form part of the domestic curtilage of the listed farmhouse, nor was it ancillary to the use of that domestic building. In this context, I note the clear boundary between the site and the garden of Praters Farmhouse to the north-east and I note that historically the site formed part of a field parcel that lay alongside the access track to the barn and yard. The boundary wall appears therefore (as does the continuation of the wall along East Town (road) to the west) to be a field boundary, historically enclosing working land associated with the agricultural function of the farm, rather than a garden wall ancillary to the domestic function of the farmhouse.

The settings of nearby heritage assets

- 3.8 In preparing this assessment, I have given consideration to built heritage assets (below-ground archaeology falls outside the scope of this assessment) in the vicinity that have the potential to be affected through change to their setting by development on the application site. Following this initial consideration, I am of the view that the designated heritage assets with the potential to be affected by the proposed development of the application site are the listed buildings (farmhouse and converted barn – both Grade II) at Praters Farm.
- 3.9 This is consistent with the Council's determination of the recent application ref.PL/2025/08695 (for development of the site with five houses), which found harm to those listed buildings but no effects to other heritage assets.
- 3.10 However, for the sake of thoroughness and because these issues were raised in local objections to the previous application, I also give consideration in this assessment to the significance and setting of Home Farmhouse and the

outbuilding to the north-west (both listed at Grade II), as well as the Sherston Conservation Area, located some distance to the south-west of the application site.

Praters Farmhouse and converted barn – both Grade II

- 3.11 Praters Farmhouse and the associated barn are both significant as post-medieval vernacular buildings, with the latter heavily restored and altered but listed principally for its group value with the farmhouse (see statutory list entry at **Appendix 1**). Together they represent the core elements of the historic farmstead at Praters Barn (HER ref. MWI71269).
- 3.12 The farmhouse is principally significant for its architectural interest as a vernacular farmhouse of the 17th century. It forms two main elements: the original two-storey range running back from the road and the slightly-later two-and-half-storey range at the south-western end. The annexe at the north-eastern end, infilling the space between the original range and the roadside boundary is probably contemporary with the south-western addition, or slightly later (mullioned windows to the annexe are all modern insertions or replacements and so provide no dating evidence).
- 3.13 The core of this architectural significance is principally embodied in the house's form and fabric, including: its distinctive plan-form; the sharp pitched roof with stone slates; the simple, mullioned windows with hood moulding; and the use of local vernacular materials and building techniques, such as roughly coursed rubble with quoins (and relieving arches to the south-western range).
- 3.14 Part of its historic interest is that the building was historically a farmhouse, as opposed to simply a rural house. This element of the significance of the building is understood through its setting, most notably the relationship between the house and the surviving barn. This has been diminished by the conversion and heavy alteration to the barn, as well as the conversion of the farmstead more generally to a domestic garden. While they were historically associated with Home Farm rather than Praters Farm, the presence of open fields opposite the farmhouse to the north-east help illustrate this historic function (with the historic distinction in ownership not articulated on the ground). That said, if it were not for the presence of the legible form of the barn to the south-west, it would not

be easy to read Praters Farmhouse now as farmhouse as opposed to simply a house.

- 3.15 Indeed, the core of the significance of the listed barn is embodied in its role in articulating the historic function and status of the listed house, as highlighted by the notation in its statutory list entry, '*Included principally for group value with Prater's Farmhouse*' (**Appendix 1**). The building retains a degree of architectural interest through its legible barn-like form but it has suffered materially from a late 20th-century conversion scheme, albeit documentation accompanying the 1974 application for the conversion (ref.N/74/00858) indicates that the building was then in a parlous state, missing the roof and comprising only the shell (so while harmful, this conversion has likely 'saved' the building).
- 3.16 That said, it is clear that even much of the shell has been rebuilt. The midstreys have had their cart openings replaced with much lower garage door openings, with the upper elements showing no sign of infilled openings (i.e. the whole of the gable elevations of the midstreys have been rebuilt). Mullioned windows to match those on the farmhouse have been inserted into the elevations, giving the barn a more domestic character than its historic function would have engendered. Larger areas of historic stonework survive on the lower parts of the south-western elevation (but for the wholly-rebuilt south-western face of the midstrey) with rebuilding to the upper parts (**plate 31**). The barn would benefit from the reinstatement of full-height openings to the midstreys, better articulating its historic function as a threshing barn. The barn is now set within domestic gardens, with its relationship with the farmhouse representing the most significant aspect of its setting.
- 3.17 Moving then onto the contribution made to the significance of these listed buildings by the application site, this field parcel was historically in the same ownership as Praters Farmhouse and the barn; however, the site is currently well separated from both listed buildings by intervening domestic gardens and boundary treatments, including a substantial planted boundary to the south-west of the farmhouse and a drystone boundary wall to the south-west of the barn.
- 3.18 These boundaries provide a clear sense of separation between the site and the immediate grounds of the listed buildings, with little sense of the open character

of the site perceived from within the listed farmhouse or its garden. Even views from the upper floors of the listed farmhouse only really take in the site in the form of the heavy planting on its north-eastern boundary. Moreover, from within the site there is little sense of the listed buildings to the north-east and it is rather the domestic buildings along Easton Town (road) to the north-west that are most strongly perceived (**plate 5**).

- 3.19 I note the assessment of the Council on the previous application affecting this site (ref. PL/2025/08695), with the Case Officer identifying harm to Praters Farm and the listed barn through the development of five houses on what they described as, '*the adjacent agricultural field*' (p.11 of the Case Officer's report); however, in my view, the site does not currently have the character of an agricultural field, which suggests an arable character. Rather, it is a grassed area with no obvious access from surrounding fields. It does not have an agricultural character; if anything, its character is closer to parkland.
- 3.20 As such, the lack of intervisibility aside, its contribution to the one's experience of the listed buildings of Praters Farm as a former farmstead is not, in my view, material. It is an open space set away from the listed buildings, well separated by existing, intervening open space more closely relates to those buildings. Moreover, its modern boundaries mean it cannot be read as part of the larger historic field parcel of which it once formed part.

Home Farmhouse and outbuildings to north-west - (both Grade II)

- 3.21 Home Farmhouse and its outbuilding range (**plates 32 & 33**) comprise a significant group of 17th-century buildings: a former farmhouse, stables, and barn. The statutory list entry for Home Farmhouse describes it as a, '*Former farmhouse, now country house*' (**Appendix 1**). This change in status is quite evident from the road, where the house is set back behind a substantial wall and entrance court. Historically, there was a well-defined working farmstead yard to the rear (south-west) of the house, now incorporated into the house's domestic garden.
- 3.22 The field parcel to the south-west of this yard was historically in the same ownership as Praters Farm (see **Fig.1** and paragraphs 2.3-4 above) but has since been brought into the same ownership as Home Farmhouse, with a new

access formed from the south in the late 20th century. The argument set out in Pegasus Group's objection to application ref. PL/2025/08695 that the track from Easton Town (road) historically formed a principal approach to Home Farm appears on the basis of the tithe map and 1885 map (**Figs.1 & 2** above) to be without basis, with these instead indicating that the track, which once ran through the application site, formed a field approach to Praters Farm, but has more recently been re-routed to serve Home Farm as part of a modern ownership changes.

- 3.23 The application site is well separated from the listed buildings of Home Farm by distance and boundary planting, while the two were not historically linked by function or ownership. I note that Pegasus Group's objection to application ref.PL/2025/08695 provides photographs from the upper floors of Home Farmhouse towards the application site. These demonstrate that the application site is not strongly experienced from that listed building except in the form of its thick north-eastern boundary planting.
- 3.24 Taking this all into account, I am not of the view that the application site in its current form makes a material contribution to the significance of the listed buildings of Home Farmhouse as part of their setting.

The Sherston Conservation Area

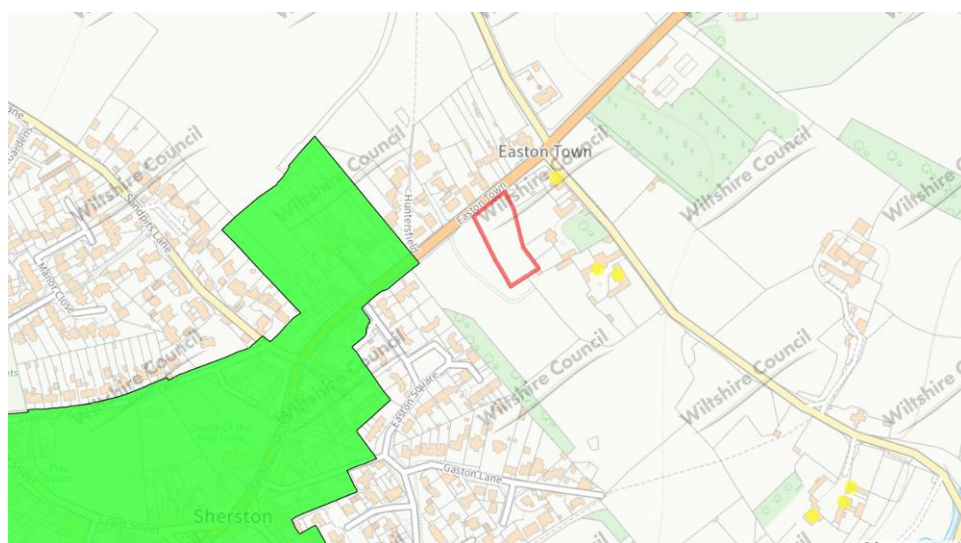


Fig.5. Wiltshire Council plan showing the boundaries of the Sherston Conservation Area closest to the application Site. The approximate application site boundaries have been highlighted in red

- 3.25 The application site is not situated within a conservation area but the Sherston Conservation Area is located to the south-west of the site, the two separated by the intervening field parcel and, for the most part, 20th-century development at Easton Square. The boundary does, however, extend onto the northern side of Easton Town (road) up to No.32, taking in the area of road running up to that property. The north-easternmost corner of the conservation area, where it takes in part of the Easton Town (road) is approximately 65m from the closest point on the application site boundary.
- 3.26 The Council's 1999 Sherston Conservation Area Appraisal divides the conservation area into six character areas, with that closest to the site comprising 'Character Area 5: Easton Town'. The analysis of that area in the conservation area appraisal concentrates on the character of the built form within the conservation area (p.34). It does, however, at p.35 note that development is found in groups along the road but houses, *'stop short of Praters Farm on the south side, allowing views to open countryside to the south and east'*. It encourages that *'remaining views to the south'* should be protected (p.35).
- 3.27 This characterisation is, in my view, fair in the context of views south from the road across the field parcel to the south-west of the application site (**plate 34**) and, indeed, the conservation area boundaries do not extend far enough along the road that there are any views southwards into the application site from the road within the conservation area (with such views from the conservation area being across the open parcel to the south-west). Indeed, the role of the application site in the views from the north side of the road identified in the conservation area appraisal is only in terms of the role of boundary planting on the south-western side of the side in framing such views to open countryside across the open field parcel to the south-west.
- 3.28 In my view, this is the extent of the contribution made by the application site to the significance of the conservation area as part of its setting. This analysis is consistent with that of the Council in the recent application ref.PL/2025/08695, where no effects to the conservation area were identified through the proposals to develop the site with five houses.

4.0 THE APPLICATION PROPOSALS & THE HERITAGE ISSUES

- 4.1 Section 3.0 established the significance of the site in built heritage terms. Having considered this, the purpose of this section of the report is to analyse the application scheme against that significance in order to establish the effects of the proposals in built heritage terms.
- 4.2 Where it relates to issues of setting, this section of the report corresponds to Step 3 of the methodology set out in GPA3, *'Assess the effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful, on the significance or on the ability to appreciate it'*, while incorporating elements of Step 4, *'Explore ways to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm'*, albeit Step 4 has already been incorporated into the application design.

Recent planning history

- 4.3 A permission in principle application was submitted in 2025 for the erection of up to five dwellings on the application site (ref. PL/2025/08695). Permission in principle was refused in December 2025. The Council's Conservation Officer was consulted on the application and, as reflected in Refusal Reason 3, took the view that the proposals would result in harm to Praters Farmhouse and its converted barn, *'by introducing suburban built form into an open field that currently contributes to their historic farmstead character and rural context. This change would erode the legibility and significance of these heritage assets...'*.
- 4.4 While I was not involved in that application, for the reasons set out at Section 3.0 above, I do not share the Council's view that the site in current form makes a material contribution to the significance of the listed buildings of the Praters Farmhouse complex as part of their setting. It is also unclear why the Council felt the proposed development would inherently be 'suburban' in form; residential development is not in principle suburban (houses exist in rural areas too, including around this application site) and the proposals were for permission in principle, so the form, layout, and design of the dwellings could have been secured at detailed design stage to ensure the development was not suburban in character.

The application proposals

- 4.5 However, the quantum of development then proposed was high for the size of the site and, as shown in the indicative layout plan, would have resulted in development extending across most of the site, down to its south-eastern boundary.
- 4.6 As such, and in response to the Council's feedback on the previous scheme, revised proposals have been drawn up. These seek permission in principle for the erection of up to three dwellings on the application site, with the indicative scheme being set at two storeys in height. As demonstrated by the indicative layout plan, these could realistically be accommodated on the north-western part of the site, close to but set back from the roadside boundary, leaving the south-eastern part of the site free from development. The indicative layout deliberately shows no proposed development south-east of a line running south-westwards from the north-eastern elevation of Praters Farmhouse, i.e. the whole area directly to the south-east of the farmhouse and barn would be left clear of development.

The heritage issues

- 4.7 The principal heritage issues in this case are the impact of the proposals on the contribution their settings make to the significance of nearby heritage assets, notably in the context of the determination of the previous application, Praters Farmhouse and its converted barn.
- 4.8 As set out above, the proposed quantum of development has been materially reduced since the previous application, with the indicative layout showing the south-eastern half of the site (the portion of the site closest to the listed buildings) left free of development, indicating that this could be achieved at detailed design stage.
- 4.9 Bearing in mind that the NPPF defines setting as, '*The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced*', the proposals will not have a material impact on how the listed buildings of Praters Farm are experienced. Indeed, as set out at Section 3.0 above, the site in its current form makes little contribution to how these are experienced, with the core elements of their setting comprising the

relationship of the buildings with one another and the domestic gardens within which they now sit. One does not strongly experience the application site alongside the listed buildings or vice versa. The relegation of proposed development to the north-western part of the site, away from the listed buildings and the existing boundaries around these, will ensure that this experience remains essentially unaffected. The proposed development will relate more closely to existing residential development on Easton Town (road) than the listed buildings, while a continuous line of open space (broken, as now, by boundary treatments) will remain running between the listed buildings and the open field parcel outside the site boundaries to the south-east. The south-eastern edge of the site, which historically incorporated the track that provided field access to the farmstead from the south, will remain clear of development.

- 4.10 In my view, the proposals would not result in a diminution of one's ability to read the historic function or status of the listed buildings of Praters Farm as part of a historic farmstead.
- 4.11 The reduced quantum of development and its indicative placement means that the proposed houses will be set substantially further from the listed buildings of Home Farm than under the previous scheme. While I note the Council found no harm to those listed buildings under the previous submission, it must follow that this remains the case for this reduced scheme. Indeed, in my own view there would clearly be no impact on the significance of those listed buildings as a result of these revised proposals.
- 4.12 Similarly, the significant views across the field parcel to the south from the edge of the conservation area, identified in the conservation area appraisal, would remain unaffected by the scheme, with the proposed housing set behind the existing, extensive planting on the south-eastern site boundary. A substantial area of open space outside the site boundaries will remain between the proposed development and the existing development at Easton Square to the south-east, preventing any sense of coalescence between Sherston and Easton Town on this side of the road. As such, I am also of the view that revised proposals would not result in harm to the significance of the conservation area through the impact on its setting.

5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 This report has assessed the significance of the application site in heritage terms, before assessing the effects of the proposed development in principle.
- 5.2 As will be clear from the discussion in the main body of the report, I am not of the view that the proposals would result in harm to the identified heritage assets.
- 5.3 As such, the proposals are consistent with both local and national policy on the conservation and enhancement of the historic built environment, including the guidance set out in the NPPF and its accompanying PPG and, most importantly of all in heritage planning terms, pass the statutory test set by Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

PLATES



Plate 1. General view south-eastwards across the application site



Plate 2. Thick planting on the north-eastern application site boundary



Plate 3. Thick planting on the north-eastern application site boundary



Plate 4. Thick planting on the south-western application site boundary (right)



Plate 5. View from the application site towards houses on Easton Town



Plate 6. The garden boundary of Easton Town Cottage at the northern corner of the application site



Plate 7. Boundary wall to the south-west of the listed converted barn; note the partial straight joints, which appear to describe an infilled opening but do not continue to the full height of the wall, suggesting the upper element has been rebuilt



Plate 8. Drystone wall on the south-eastern site boundary



Plate 9. Drystone wall on the south-eastern site boundary, with corrugated roof of outbuilding outside site boundaries visible over



Plate 10. Orchard, garden, and outbuilding to the south of the listed barn



Plate 11. Listed barn seen across the orchard to the south



Plate 12. The western end of Praters Farmhouse



Plate 13. Praters Farmhouse from within its garden to the south



Plate 14. Praters Farmhouse and the barn seen across the garden to the south (the application site is located beyond the tall tree boundary visible behind the barn to the right)



Plate 15. The south-western elevation of the barn, from the orchard located between the barn and the application site; note the visible elevation of the midstrey has been rebuilt



Plate 16. Looking towards the application site from the orchard to the south-west of the listed barn; the area of the application site visible in this image is not proposed for development under the indicative site layout



Plate 17. The south-western elevation of Praters Farmhouse, from the garden located between the farmhouse and the application site



Plate 18. The application site boundary from in front of the south-western elevation of Praters Farmhouse



Plate 19. Praters Farmhouse from the road



Plate 20. Praters Farmhouse and barn from the road access



Plate 21. Looking south-eastwards along the road from outside Praters Farm



Plate 22. Home Farm from the road



Plate 23. Paddock on the northern side of the road, opposite the access to Praters Farm



Plate 24. Easton Town Cottage, immediately to the north-west of Praters Farmhouse, with development on Easton Town visible beyond



Plate 25. Residential development along Easton Town



Plate 26. Access to the garden of Easton Town Cottage from Easton Town; the application site is to the right



Plate 27. View along Easton Town; the application site is located beyond the shed towards the centre of the image



Plate 28. Looking directly towards the application site from Easton Town



Plate 29. Houses on the northern side of Easton Town sit directly opposite the application site



Plate 30. Modern housing (right) to the south-west of the application site; the application site is situated beyond the planted boundary visible towards the centre of this image



Plate 31. The south-western elevation of the barn; note the rebuilding of the upper element



Plate 32. Home Farmhouse and its listed outbuilding from the road



Plate 33. The listed outbuilding at Home Farm from the road



Plate 34. View from the road into the field parcel to the south-west of the application site, looking towards open countryside to the south (the application site is located beyond the thick planted boundary to the left)

APPENDIX 1

Relevant statutory list entries

Official list entry

Heritage Category:

Listed Building

Grade:

II

List Entry Number:

1023233

Date first listed:

12-Dec-1951

List Entry Name:

Prater's Farmhouse

Statutory Address 1:

PRATER'S FARMHOUSE

The scope of legal protection for listed buildings

This List entry helps identify the building designated at this address for its special architectural or historic interest.

Unless the List entry states otherwise, it includes both the structure itself and any object or structure fixed to it (whether inside or outside) as well as any object or structure within the curtilage of the building.

For these purposes, to be included within the curtilage of the building, the object or structure must have formed part of the land since before 1st July 1948.

[Understanding list entries](#)

[Corrections and minor amendments](#)

Location

Statutory Address:

PRATER'S FARMHOUSE

The building or site itself may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

District:

Wiltshire (Unitary Authority)

Parish:

Sherston

National Grid Reference:

ST 85727 86279

Details

SHERSTON EASTON TOWN ST 8486-8586 7/101 Prater's Farmhouse 12.12.51 GV II

Former farmhouse, now country house. Early C17 with late C17 west addition. Coursed rubble with stone dressings to windows and gabled stone slate roofs with stone stacks. L-shaped plan with early C17 range at right-angles to road and later C17 block parallel to the west. Two-storey, 3-window core range and 2 storeys and attic, 3-window west front to late C17 block. Windows to core range are 2-light cavetto-moulded mullions with small leaded pane casements; windows to later block are 2 and 3-light ovolo-moulded mullions with small leaded pane casements: strainer arches over ground and first floor windows, 2 gables to outer attic windows. Late C19 doorcase with gabled hood on brackets off-centre to left in core range. Interior. Extensive restoration retaining chamfered beams, 2 inglenook fireplaces (one in each range), some panelled C17 doors and butt-purlin, tie-beam roof structure in late C17 block.

Listing NGR: ST8571086255

Legacy

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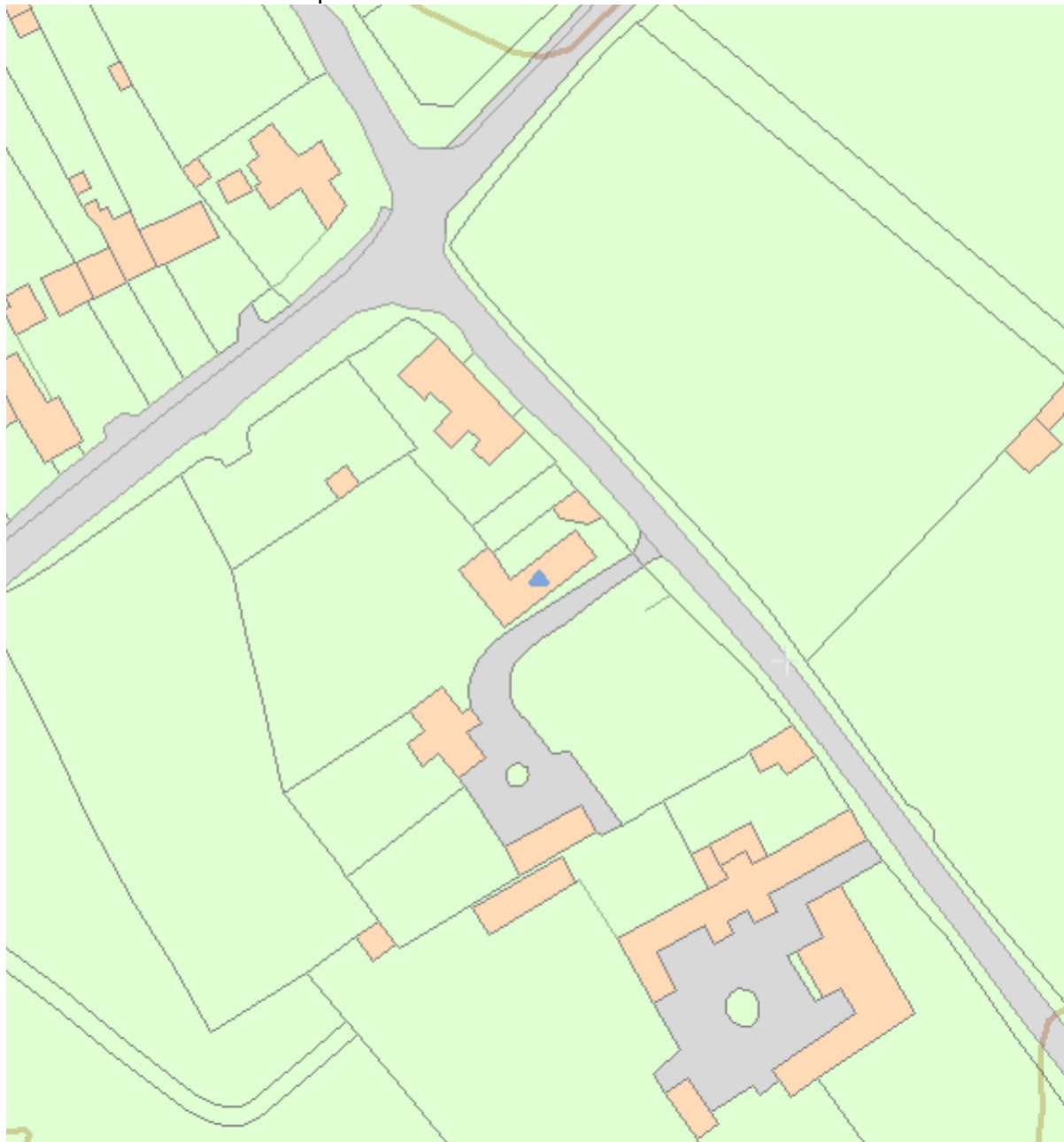
Legacy System number:

318098

Legacy System:
LBS

Legal

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Map

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End of official list entry

Official list entry

Heritage Category:

Listed Building

Grade:

II

List Entry Number:

1023234

Date first listed:

12-Dec-1951

List Entry Name:

Barn to the South West of Prater's Farmhouse

Statutory Address 1:

BARN TO THE SOUTH WEST OF PRATER'S FARMHOUSE

The scope of legal protection for listed buildings

This List entry helps identify the building designated at this address for its special architectural or historic interest.

Unless the List entry states otherwise, it includes both the structure itself and any object or structure fixed to it (whether inside or outside) as well as any object or structure within the curtilage of the building.

For these purposes, to be included within the curtilage of the building, the object or structure must have formed part of the land since before 1st July 1948.

[Understanding list entries](#)

[Corrections and minor amendments](#)

Location

Statutory Address:

BARN TO THE SOUTH WEST OF PRATER'S FARMHOUSE

The building or site itself may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

District:

Wiltshire (Unitary Authority)

Parish:

Sherston

National Grid Reference:

ST 85712 86251

Details

SHERSTON EASTON TOWN ST 8486-8586 7/102 Barn to the south-west of Prater's Farmhouse 12.12.51 GV II

Former barn, now studio. C17 in origin with extensive C20 restoration. Coursed rubble with flush rusticated dressed stone quoins, concrete lintels and gabled concrete tile roof. Cruciform plan with east and west midstreys. C20 casement fenestration to west facade, 3 and 4-light C20 mullioned windows to east facade. Two-leaf plank gates to east midstre entrance. Included principally for group value with Prater's Farmhouse (q.v.).

Listing NGR: ST8571086255

Legacy

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Legacy System number:

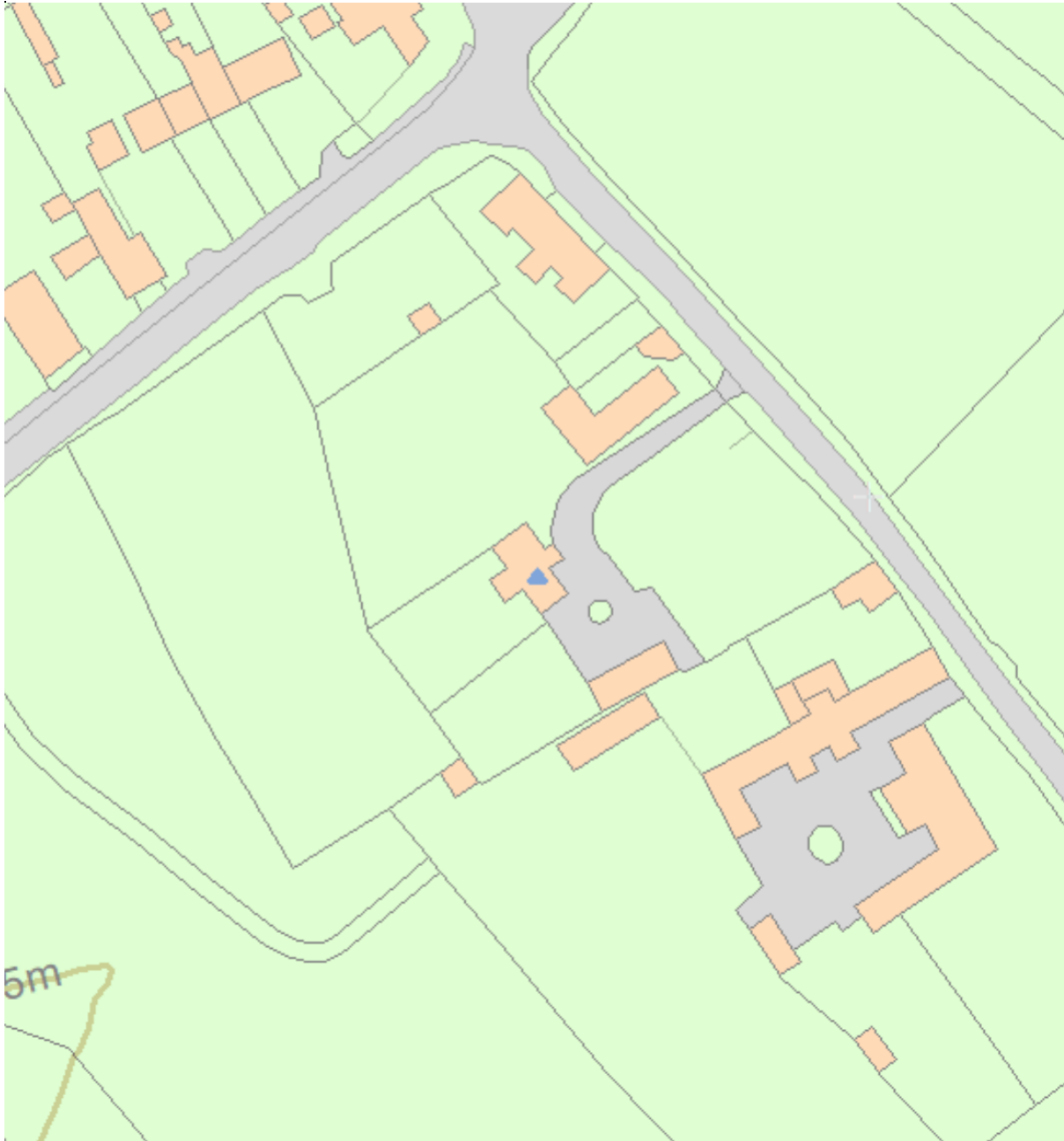
318099

Legacy System:

LBS

Legal

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End of official list entry

Official list entry

Heritage Category:

Listed Building

Grade:

II

List Entry Number:

1199681

Date first listed:

12-Dec-1951

List Entry Name:

Home Farmhouse

Statutory Address 1:

HOME FARMHOUSE

The scope of legal protection for listed buildings

This List entry helps identify the building designated at this address for its special architectural or historic interest.

Unless the List entry states otherwise, it includes both the structure itself and any object or structure fixed to it (whether inside or outside) as well as any object or structure within the curtilage of the building.

For these purposes, to be included within the curtilage of the building, the object or structure must have formed part of the land since before 1st July 1948.

[Understanding list entries](#)

[Corrections and minor amendments](#)

Location

Statutory Address:

HOME FARMHOUSE

The building or site itself may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

District:

Wiltshire (Unitary Authority)

Parish:

Sherston

National Grid Reference:

ST 85779 86214

Details

SHERSTON EASTON TOWN ST 8486-8586 7/103 Home Farmhouse 12.12.51 GV II

Former farmhouse, now country house. Mid C17 with early C20 alterations and additions. Coursed rubble with stone dressings to windows and gabled stone slate roofs with end stone stacks in pairs with moulded caps and bases. T-shaped plan with C17 block and addition parallel to road and rear C20 service range. East front of 2 storeys and attic, 3 windows with 2-storey, 1-window addition to left forming elevation of 3 unequal gables. Windows are C20 two, 3 and 4-light ovolo-moulded mullions with hoodmoulds and small pane casements except attic windows and blocked openings above in main range which are original. Doorway central to main range with C20 bolection-moulded architrave and part glazed C20 door. Further C20 door to left addition. Interior. Tudor-arched fireplace in ground floor room to right; several stop-chamfered beams; circular newel staircase to spine passage on first floor; several C17 door frames and plank doors; original butt-purlin, collar beam roof structure.

Listing NGR: ST8577986214

Legacy

The contents of this record have been generated from a legacy data system.

Legacy System number:

318100

Legacy System:

LBS

Legal

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End of official list entry

Official list entry

Heritage Category:

Listed Building

Grade:

II

List Entry Number:

1023235

Date first listed:

12-Dec-1951

List Entry Name:

Outbuildings to the North of Home Farmhouse

Statutory Address 1:

OUTBUILDINGS TO THE NORTH OF HOME FARMHOUSE

The scope of legal protection for listed buildings

This List entry helps identify the building designated at this address for its special architectural or historic interest.

Unless the List entry states otherwise, it includes both the structure itself and any object or structure fixed to it (whether inside or outside) as well as any object or structure within the curtilage of the building.

For these purposes, to be included within the curtilage of the building, the object or structure must have formed part of the land since before 1st July 1948.

[Understanding list entries](#)

[Corrections and minor amendments](#)

Location

Statutory Address:

OUTBUILDINGS TO THE NORTH OF HOME FARMHOUSE

The building or site itself may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

District:

Wiltshire (Unitary Authority)

Parish:

Sherston

National Grid Reference:

ST 85761 86224

Details

SHERSTON EASTON TOWN ST 8486-8586 7/104 Outbuildings to the north of Home Farmhouse 12.12.51 GV II

Long range comprising stables with haylofts over, central barn and loose boxes set at right-angles to the road. C17 stables and barn, early C20 loose boxes. Coursed rubble with stone dressings, wooden lintels, plank doors and gates and gabled stone slate roofs. Stables and hayloft with end gable and 2 side gables, casement fenestration and steps up to loft which has original collar beam roof. Barn has south midstrey with weatherboarding to gable and 2-leaf plank gates; further gabled projection to north front. Butt-purlin, collar beam roof structure with some renewal of timbers. Loose boxes have 2-leaf plank gates.

Listing NGR: ST8576186224

Legacy

The contents of this record have been generated from a legacy data system.

Legacy System number:

318101

Legacy System:

LBS

Legal

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