

HERITAGE STATEMENT

Repair and Rebuilding of Curtilage Boundary Wall and Gated Entrance
Hatch Farmhouse, East Hatch, West Tisbury, Wiltshire, SP3 6PH

Site address: Hatch Farmhouse, East Hatch, West Tisbury, Wiltshire, SP3 6PH

Listed building: Hatch Farmhouse — Grade II, List Entry 1318817, listed 6 July 1987

Local planning authority: Wiltshire Council

Civil parish: West Tisbury

Application type: Listed Building Consent



1. Introduction and Purpose

This statement has been prepared in support of an application for Listed Building Consent for the careful dismantling, foundation repair and like-for-like rebuilding of a section of stone curtilage wall and its gated entrance at Hatch Farmhouse, East Hatch, West Tisbury, Wiltshire.

Its purpose is to describe the significance of the listed building and the wall as part of its curtilage, to explain the condition that makes the works necessary, and to assess the effect of the proposed works on that significance, as required under the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Wiltshire Council's development plan policy for the historic environment.

2. Site and Planning Context

Hatch Farmhouse stands within the hamlet of East Hatch, in the civil parish of West Tisbury, approximately 2km west of Tisbury village. The house sits within its own grounds, with a stone boundary wall running along the side of the property. A gated opening in the wall provides a subsidiary rear access to the property, distinct from the main entrance to the house. The wall and gate are attached to, and stand within the curtilage of, the main house.

The site falls within Wiltshire Council's unitary planning authority and lies within the wider Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The applicant should confirm with Wiltshire Council whether the site falls within the boundary of the Tisbury Conservation Area, as this affects which additional policies apply; this statement has been prepared on the basis of the site's listed status, which applies regardless of conservation area boundaries.

3. Statutory Designation

Hatch Farmhouse is listed Grade II under List Entry 1318817, first listed on 6 July 1987. The official Historic England list description reads:

"Farmhouse. Late C17, addition of early C18. Dressed limestone, tiled roof, brick and stone stacks. L-plan C17 range to east with C18 L-plan wing to west. Two-storey, 2-window front of C18 range; planked door to right, two 3-light recessed chamfered mullioned casements to ground and first floor. C17 range to right has single-storey wing with C20 porch and planked inner door to right return, range to right has 3-light and 2-light mullioned casements. Rear of C17 range has blocked doorway, 4-panelled door and two 3-light mullioned casements to both floors, C18 range and rear wing has blocked window, wooden casements. Interior has chamfered beams, altered C20."

(Source: Historic England, List Entry 1318817, National Heritage List for England.)

The list description does not separately describe the boundary wall. However, under section 1(5) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, any object or structure fixed to the listed building, and any object or structure within its curtilage that has formed part of the land since before 1 July 1948, is treated as part of the listed building for consent purposes. The wall in question is attached to the side of the main house and stands within its historic curtilage, and Listed Building Consent is accordingly sought for the works to it.

4. Description of the Wall and Gated Entrance

The affected structure is a stone boundary wall standing approximately four feet (1.2m) high along most of its length, built of coursed rubble limestone with a flat stone coping, running along the side of the main house and continuing as the property boundary toward open farmland beyond (see Appendix A, Photo 1). The stone is of local origin, consistent in character with the Tisbury and Chilmark limestone historically quarried within a few miles of the site and used widely in the area's vernacular buildings, including, it is reasonable to assume, the farmhouse itself. A subsidiary gated opening forms part of the same run, providing rear access to the property rather than serving as the main entrance to the house. It is marked by a shaped stone pier with a moulded, ramped and rolled coping, echoing a matching scrolled detail where the wall meets the house itself. A boarded timber gate is set within the pier opening (Photos 5 and 6).

The wall and gate contribute to the setting of the listed building. They reinforce the historic boundary treatment of the farmhouse plot and use matching traditional materials, but as a secondary, rear access point they are of lesser prominence within the overall setting than the principal entrance front of the house.

5. Assessment of Significance

The significance of Hatch Farmhouse derives principally from its architectural and historic interest as a late seventeenth-century farmhouse with an early eighteenth-century addition, retaining dressed limestone construction, mullioned casements and chamfered beams. The wall and its subsidiary rear gated access hold a lower, contributory level of significance as a curtilage feature: their value lies in the way they support and complete the setting of the principal building, using matching materials and traditional walling technique, rather than in any special architectural interest of the wall itself. As a rear, secondary access rather than the principal entrance, this part of the boundary is less prominent within the site's overall setting, though the moulded, ramped coping at the gate pier and at the wall's junction with the house is still a more considered piece of stonework than a plain field boundary would need, and adds a modest architectural quality of its own.

In Historic England's terms, the wall's significance is best described as evidential and aesthetic rather than architectural: it evidences a traditional approach to enclosing and defining the farmhouse plot using stone from the local building tradition, and its materials, coursing and coping detail contribute to the aesthetic coherence of the site as a whole.

6. Condition Survey and Justification for the Works

The ground beneath the wall is suffering from subsidence, and inspection of the wall confirms clear physical evidence of this movement. A diagonal crack runs through several courses of stonework partway along the affected run, consistent with differential settlement beneath the wall's foundation (Appendix A, Photo 3). At the gated entrance, the stone coping has cracked and separated, with sections of the pier visibly displaced from their original position (Photo 4). Ivy and other self-seeded growth have colonised parts of the wall; root action of this kind is a further, compounding cause of loosening in traditionally bedded walling of this type.

As an interim safety measure, timber and steel raking shores have already been installed against the leaning gate pier and adjoining wall (Photo 2), pending permanent repair. This temporary propping does not address the underlying cause, which is the subsided ground beneath the foundation, and is not a long-term solution. Left as it stands, the wall and gate surround are likely to fail, at which point the stone would need to be cleared away rather than carefully conserved.

The works proposed here are a direct, proportionate response to that risk, and are designed specifically to retain and reuse the historic fabric rather than replace it.

7. Description of Proposed Works

The proposed works comprise:

- Careful, hand dismantling of the affected wall and gate surround, recording and setting aside each stone for reuse.
- Excavation and preparation of a new foundation beneath the affected run, designed to address the ground subsidence and provide a stable base.
- Rebuilding of the wall and gate surround using the same stone, recovered and reused, laid to match the existing coursing, bond, height and profile exactly, including reinstatement of the moulded, ramped coping in its existing form.
- Reinstatement of the gated entrance in its present form and position, using the existing gate and ironmongery where sound, or a matching replacement where an element cannot be reused.

No change is proposed to the height, alignment, materials or overall appearance of the wall or gate. The works are a repair, not an alteration, and are intended to return the structure to a stable version of its existing form.

8. Assessment of Impact on Significance

Because the works retain the full run of the existing wall's materials and rebuild it to match the current bond, coursing and dimensions exactly, they do not alter the appearance, materials or character of the wall or its contribution to the setting of the listed building. There is a short-term, temporary loss of the wall's standing historic fabric while it is dismantled and rebuilt, but no permanent loss of material, since the same stone is reused throughout.

Set against this, the works remove a genuine structural safety risk and secure the long-term survival of a feature that would otherwise be at real risk of uncontrolled collapse. On this basis, the works represent, at most, a negligible and temporary effect on the significance of the listed building, and in the longer term are a heritage benefit, since they secure a feature that is currently failing.

Should Wiltshire Council's conservation officer consider that any harm arises from the temporary dismantling of standing fabric, that harm would fall at the lowest end of the less than substantial harm category set out in the NPPF. It would be clearly outweighed by the public benefit of removing a safety hazard and by the heritage benefit of securing the wall's long-term retention in its existing form, using its existing materials.

9. Relevant Planning Policy and Guidance

This statement has had regard to:

- Sections 16 and 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, which place a duty on the decision-maker to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building, its setting and any features of special architectural or historic interest it possesses.
- The National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024), Chapter 16, which requires great weight to be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets, and sets out how harm should be weighed against public benefits where it arises.
- Wiltshire Core Strategy (adopted January 2015), Core Policy 58: Ensuring the Conservation of the Historic Environment.
- Historic England Advice Note 2: Making Changes to Heritage Assets, and Advice Note 16: Listed Building Consent, both of which support minimal-intervention, like-for-like repair as the preferred approach to failing historic fabric.

The proposed works are consistent with this framework: they are a like-for-like repair using retained historic materials, carried out to address a genuine structural problem, and they cause no lasting change to the appearance or fabric of the listed building or its setting.

10. Conclusion

The stone boundary wall and gated entrance at Hatch Farmhouse form a modest but valued part of the curtilage of a Grade II listed building. Ground subsidence has left the gate surround and around 20 metres of walling structurally unstable and at risk of collapse. The proposed works, careful dismantling, new foundation works, and rebuilding using the existing stone to match the existing style exactly, are a necessary and proportionate response to that risk.

Because the works retain and reuse the historic fabric and replicate the existing form precisely, they preserve the character and appearance of the listed building and its setting. The application is considered to accord with the NPPF, Wiltshire Core Strategy Core Policy 58, and the statutory duties under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, and it is respectfully requested that Listed Building Consent be granted.

This statement should be read alongside the accompanying application drawings and any structural engineer's assessment of the ground conditions and foundation design. Site photographs are provided at Appendix A.

Appendix A: Site Photographs



Photo 1: General view of the boundary wall and subsidiary rear gated access from the roadside, showing its relationship to the farmhouse and the temporary propping currently in place.



Photo 2: Detail of the temporary timber and steel raking shores installed against the gate pier and adjoining wall as an interim safety measure.



Photo 3: Displacement and leaning of the coursed stonework, consistent with ground movement beneath the wall's foundation.



Photo 4: Cracking and displacement of the stone coping at the gated entrance pier, showing the extent of movement.



Photo 5: The subsidiary rear gated access and its moulded, ramped stone coping, with the boundary wall continuing beyond.