

Our Ref: DET.LT.6/32 2006 K0001.ms

Mr P Whiteley and Mr W Whiteley
Upper Studley Farm
Swindon Road
Wiltshire
SN4 8ET

Community & Environment
North Wiltshire District Council
Monkton Park
Chippenham
Wiltshire SN15 1ER

3rd January 2006

Dear Mr P Whiteley and Mr W Whiteley

UPPER STUDLEY FARM

Further to Ms Madle's letter of 29th December, I am writing to make an appointment to visit you and inspect the property on Monday 16th January at 10am.

Please ring me on 01249 6706508 if this is not convenient.

Yours sincerely



Lynda Jubb
Historic Buildings Surveyor
Design & Estates
Tel. 01249 706508
Fax. 01249 443943
Email ljubb@northwilt.gov.uk

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2006 K0087 ms

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Upper Studley Farm
Swindon Road
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Community & Environment
North Wiltshire District Council
Monkton Park
Chippenham
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SN15 1ER

1st February 2006

Dear Mssrs Whiteley

UPPER STUDLEY FARM

Thank you for your kind hospitality when I visited. I was very touched that you felt able to go ahead with the inspection so soon after the operation and I trust that you continue to make a good recovery.

I looked at the roof void where you felt concern about the obviously live infestation of woodboring beetles. Timber treatment carried out some time ago is now out of guarantee and you were considering what, if anything, you ought to do next to abate the resultant loss of historic fabric. My opinion was that most of the damage was by common furniture beetle to sapwood and the main structural trusses appear sound. The roof itself is underdrawn with bitumen soaked mineral felt which, with the tiles, is in fair condition and I did not see any obvious leaks (I believe the valley gutter has been mended). Unfortunately, this modern waterproofing also tends to trap moisture generated inside the house as condensation in the void. There is a proven link between raised humidity and beetle attack.

The use of insecticidal and preservative treatments is not always in the interests of the building as it kills indiscriminately both predator and pest. We tend to recommend that, as a first step, the level of background ventilation is improved and that moisture levels are kept low, to control the attack. You need to be vigilant for roof leaks and mend any that occur at once. I did not see any obvious activity which might be generating the humidity, such as drying laundry or large scale food preparation, but I recommend that in the kitchen and bathroom, you introduce more ventilation, and in the roof void, it should be possible to install a non-mechanical passive ventilator in the gable window to help keep the humidity low.

I am not sure how much you use the fires now. The North stack is clearly unused for some time, and it appears you rely on the heat from the kitchen stove most of the time. Using the open fires in other rooms more would improve ventilation and lower humidity. Can I suggest you try these minor interventions and then allow us to review the situation?

Your other major concern was about the fireplace which has partially collapsed in the Lounge and which has been temporarily propped and cleared while you consider what needs to be done. I couldn't make out the age or importance of the exposed ovens and structures and as a first step, I recommend that no more historic fabric be removed without first getting the opinion of an archaeologist. My colleague, Mr Faulkner, has kindly agreed to make an inspection with me to record the remains and help us to understand that which has been exposed. We can visit you on 16th February at 10.30am. Would you be kind enough to contact me on 01249 706508 if this is not convenient?

Generally, work to a listed building should not be carried out without listed building consent unless it is strictly like-for-like. Failure to obtain consent for a repair or alteration is a criminal offence. However, the temporary repair you have made to the fireplace was clearly urgent. In these cases, we ask for retrospective consent application for making good, and to obtain consent, it will be necessary for us to understand what you have found and how best to restore this important feature.

As I made my inspection, I observed a number of other alterations, some from many years ago, which have also been carried out without consent. For example, I noticed the insertion of modern windows, the use of uPVC guttering and the insertion of concrete blockwork panels in the barn wall. It would not be appropriate for the Council to pursue these breaches in view of the amount of time that has passed since the work was done. Moreover, we aim to help you to put things right. I would therefore very strongly advise you to carry out no further work of alteration without listed building consent, and whenever repairs do become necessary, you should contact us for advice.

Finally, we talked a little about the cost of repairs and your plans for the future. The Council has no historic building grant schemes at the moment. There are some DEFRA and RDA grant schemes available, and I enclose leaflets about this, but they tend to be targeted at farm diversification and farm businesses. From my initial research, I form the impression that there is little help available for people who are semi-retired and not running the farm business as a commercial enterprise, but I will bear you in mind whenever I research the funding situation in future.

Buildings that are listed and in poor condition are my concern as the Design and Estates Team look after the Council's Buildings at Risk Register. I have entered your property on the Buildings at Risk Register for monitoring until the Council is satisfied that the condition has been stabilised. Please feel free to contact me for advice about your property at any time. I look forward to seeing you again soon.

Yours sincerely



Lynda Jubb
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cc: D Faulkner (electronic copy)

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29 December 2005

Dear Sirs

Grant Aid Enquiry - Upper Studley Farm

Following my recent visit, I have now had an opportunity to consider the works required at the above property.

We offer two types of grants for this sort of work, both of which are discretionary. The first is a small works grant (maximum £5,000 within a 3 year period), the second a renovation grant. The maximum payable under the latter is £20,000 but requires the property to be made fit on completion of the works. On brief inspection, I consider that fairly extensive works would be required to meet the fitness standard and that this would not be achievable within a budget of £20,000. The excess cost would therefore fall to you to cover.

In addition, the council has a responsibility to ensure that all properties identified as unfit under the current Housing Act legislation are made fit. I am therefore unable to offer a small works grant without ensuring that all necessary works are carried out and the property brought back to fitness standard.

In the circumstances and as your property dates back to the 1600s and is grade 2 listed, I have spoken to Lynda Jubb, our historic building surveyor, with a view to looking at other options and funding avenues open to you. Lynda will be contacting you shortly to arrange an initial visit to your property.

I hope this is satisfactory but if you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Helen Madie
Private Sector Housing Officer
Tel. 01249 706546
Fax. 01249 444650
Email hmadie@northwils.gov.uk

✓ Copy to: Lynda Jubb

SU 18 SW

LYDIARD TREGOZE

A420 SWINDON TO

CHIPPENHAM ROAD

6/32

Upper Studley Farmhouse

II

Farmhouse, c1625. Coursed limestone rubble with ashlar quoins, Roman tiled roof. 2-storey, 3-bay on L plan, the 2 bays extended by further bay as agricultural space, also C17. Gable stacks to the 2-bay block, door in right bay. 3-light ovolo moulded stone mullioned windows, ground floor replaced with early C19 18-pane sashes. Relieving arches over. Mid wall hollow moulded string course. Single light ovolo windows to gable. Rear windows blocked. Recent rear extensions.

Interior: Cross ceiling beams with barred run-out stops to main rooms. Large blocked fireplaces. Stair in re-entrant angle. Roof, 5 bays with double purlins.

SU 18 SW

LYDIARD TREGOZE

BASSETT DOWN ROAD

6/33

Can Court Farmhouse

II

Farmhouse, late C16. Coursed limestone with ashlar quoins, stone slated roof. 2-storey, 3 bays, cellar and attics. Central hall with 2-storey porch, flanking reception rooms and rear extension. Gable stacks with diagonal flues. Elevation: twin steep pitched gables with ball finials. Upper floor windows ovolo moulded stone-mullioned with square labels. Lower windows renewed. Stone relieving arches. Porch timber framed with moulded jetty bressumers and moulded eaves.

Interior: not seen. Said to have panelling and stair brought from Broad Hinton Manor House. (see letter from Agent on LCHS File re UPVC windows)

UPVC windows installed before 1970

Insert:

b/3

S& opposite.

BASSETT DOWN

Roman Walk
Farmhouse

**SCHEDULE OF CONDITION
UPPER STUDLEY FARM
16th January 2006**

DET.LT.6'32

INSPECTION DATE: 16th January 2006

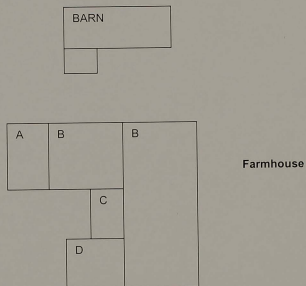
PURPOSE OF REPORT: This report is prepared for the purpose of determining the procedure to be followed by NWDC under the Council's Buildings At Risk Strategy

WEATHER CONDITIONS: Cold, Overcast, Showers.

DESCRIPTION: dating from c1625 this building has been in continuous use as a Farmhouse. The brothers Whitley (81) have own and occupied it since 1969. The Farmhouse is L shaped on plan, two story with accommodation loft, extension to left of front wing originally for agricultural use. Gabled stacks (left now built in by one bay) over large (once blocked-up) fireplaces. The barn opposite is later and was not inspected internally. The barn and outbuildings are curtilage listed only.

LISTING: Listed Grade II.

Location Plan. Illustrative only; not to scale



CONDITION SCHEDULE :

LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	CONDITION	PHOTOGRAPH	ACTION
FARMHOUSE				
EXTERNAL				
WALLS	Course of rubble masonry to main building is shaped block B. Larger coursed rubble limestone to block D (main to). Block A (lean-to) Flemish Garden wall bond brickwork.	Block B fair condition. Block D fair condition. Block A poor condition, cracking over window and around door, some bricks missing and spalled.		Carry out repointing and minor repairs to blocks B and . Allow for partial rebuilding of Block A.
ROOF	Main roof, two purlin oak / chestnut frame and square section rafters, Roman clay tile, on sarking felt, three bays to front part of Block B and one bay to rear part of Block B. South gable was once half-timbered, brick infill. Block A interior of roof not inspected. Block C interior of roof not inspected.	Main roof fair, lean to Block A tiles poor, verge missing and no rainwater goods. Roof Block C sheeted, not visible for inspection from ground. Some beetle attack observed in roof timbers. Mostly to sapwood, ventilation poor, not damp.		Improve ventilation to roof space. Note: Previous timber treatment not successful.
RAINWATER GOODS	Aluminium replacement components.	Poor.		Allow to overhaul, replacing 50% in new cast iron, clear grates etc.
JOINERY	Windows mixed vintage, mostly modern powder coated aluminum, replaced about 20 years ago.	Poor, compliance issues.		Establish compliance issues, advise owners. Make LB consent application for phased replacement in original patterns.
Interior	Joinery - Mixed ages. Heavy chamfered frames to some openings at first floor, likely to be C17th, but some first floor doors, C18th and C19th. Mainly C19th at GF.	Fair. Some good exemplars.		Maintain and protect.
	Fireplaces	Poor. North fireplace partially dismantled. V poor condition.		Commission Archaeological Appraisal, make LB consent application and make good temporary works.

LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	CONDITION	PHOTOGRAPH	ACTION
BARN	Dressed limestone walls, with patch replacements in brick and precast concrete blocks. Slate roof, metal windows and boarded softwood doors, various ages, predominantly C20th replacements in originals frames	Walls have been poorly repaired, most windows and doors poor condition, roof nearing end of life, evidence of patch repairs.		Monitor, allow for major roofing repair in two year's time.
OTHER STRUCTURES	Not inspected			

GENERAL: The farm is owned and occupied by Msrs Whitely who are semi-retired having less than thirty head of cattle. The milk produced is not used for human consumption because it is uneconomic to collect. Msr Whitely are both 81 years of age and when visited one of the brothers was convalescing after knee surgery. Access internally was accompanied to the roof space, where the owners felt concern about the obviously live beetle attack. The other area of concern was the North fireplace and lounge which is held on props and temporary supports. The fire place largely fell down. Archaeological recording is recommended and LBC application for the rebuilding technique.

The assessment of risk is not in the highest category because the property is occupied and the rate and level of interventions is fairly low. The window replacement which took place some time ago is regrettable but unlikely to be actionable at this stage. The owners should be advised of the areas where action is required, deterred from doing further unauthorised works, and asked to consider the future maintenance. Monitor condition at (say?) six monthly intervals.

LJ 1 February 2006











