



# STANDING BARN TAYNTON

HERITAGE REPORT  
MARCH 2020

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## WORLLEDGE ASSOCIATES

Worlledge Associates is an Oxford-based heritage consultancy, committed to the effective management of the historic environment. Established in 2014 by Nicholas and Alison Worlledge, Nicholas came to private practice with over 35 years' experience working in heritage management for local authorities. This intimate knowledge and understanding of council processes, and planning policy and practice, helps us to work collaboratively with owners and decision-makers to manage change to the historic environment.

Our team of dedicated researchers and specialists believe in the capacity of the historic environment to contribute to society's collective economic, social, and cultural well-being. We aim to identify what is significant about places and spaces in order to support their effective management and sustain their heritage value. We have worked with a wide range of property-owners and developers including universities and colleges, museums and libraries, large country estates, manor house, farmsteads, cottages, town houses and new housing sites.

## INTRODUCTION

The intelligent management of change is a key principle necessary to sustain the historic environment for present and future generations to enjoy. Historic England and successive government agencies have published policy and advice that extend our understanding of the historic environment and develop our competency in making decisions about how to manage it.

Paragraphs 4-10 of Historic England's Good Practice Advice Note 2 (Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment) explains that applications (for planning permission and listed building consent) have a greater likelihood of success and better decisions will be made when applicants and local planning authorities assess and understand the particular nature of the significance of an asset, the extent of the asset's fabric to which the significance relates and the level of importance of that significance.

The National Planning Policy Framework (July 2018) provides a very similar message in paragraphs 189 and 190 expecting both applicant and local planning authority to take responsibility for understanding the significance of a heritage asset and the impact of a development proposal, seeking to avoid unacceptable conflict between the asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

It has never been the intention of government to prevent change or freeze frame local communities and current policy and good practice suggests that change, if managed intelligently would not be harmful.

This report provides a brief history of the development of the village of Taynton and its farmstead; focussing on the evolution of the former Taynton Farm and its former farmstead, comprising an unlisted barn, (converted to residential use in the 1980s) and the redundant cart lodge and granary, small barn and range of open sided buildings, which are grade I listed, and which together form the three sides of an open farmyard.

These buildings, and their condition, are briefly described, and based on this surviving fabric, their historic development and the broader context of Cotswold farming, a summary is provided of the farmstead's heritage significance, based on Historic England's definition and guidelines.

A summary is provided of the relevant National and Local planning policies and guidelines on the management of heritage assets, focussing on those related to the adaptive reuse of former, but now redundant farm buildings, before summarising the opportunities and benefits of developing a scheme to provide for the viable long-term preservation of the farmstead, which contributes to the historical and architectural significance and character of Taynton.





St John's Church, 1900

## FARMSTEADS & THE TAYNTON LANDSCAPE

Often prosaic in their general character and appearance, farmhouses and their farm buildings lie at the heart country existence, defining not only its landscape but also its social- economic life. They are an important part of the character of the countryside, and along with field patterns and boundaries, they help to create a local identity and sense of place. These, functional structures, reflect the singular relationship between local building traditions and the landscape and its use itself articulating the way in which ordinary people have collectively built their environment and how, in turn, it has cultivated certain values and patterns of daily life.

The traditions followed in their construction are founded on shared experience and tempered by the local climate and availability of resources. As such these are, as Historic England suggests, buildings very much in harmony with their local settings. As structures constructed of locally sourced materials and often by local builders or farmers themselves, they can be said to be a cultural expression of ordinary people. Their survival evidences the way their owners lived and the value they place on things that went in them – the livestock and grain that was vital to the economic survival of the farming way of life.

This strong connection to locality is one that inscribes the farmhouse and the farm buildings with an underlying communal value. The simplicity of the farm buildings to a great extent, helps sensitise us to the significance of everyday objects, reminding us of the value inherent in even the simplest and utilitarian of places

### TAYNTON

At Taynton, farm buildings are both a prism through which the history and social- economic life of the village can be understood and an organizing frame through which its settlement pattern can be defined.

Along with its quarry, farming played a key role in the morphology of the village and it is its farmsteads, rather than a designed relationship between its manor house and church, that are in fact its key defining character and organising principle.

As Mark Child (2013) has observed, Taynton at first “appears to be an undisciplined arrangement of a place, until one realises that it effectively comprises of four large old farmsteads” that lie at the north and west peripheries and that form significant clusters that help define the extent of the settlement (Child Mark 2013. “Taynton” in *The Windrush Valley*. Amberley Publishing; Gloucestershire) A number of side roads branch off from the Burford road at the terminal end of which is one of the four farms; Lower farm to the north, Manor Farm to the south, Lower farm to the north, and Upper and Garnes Farms to the west.

The Church is noted as having a good Early English chancel. (Ditchfield P. H. 2013. *Oxfordshire*. Cambridge University Press; Cambridge. p. 29) The church porch is found unusually on the north side. The entrance from the south – now blocked up – was “effectively the lord of the manor’s private way in before the manor house, which stood in an adjacent field was destroyed by fire.” The scene presented today is still a generally an agrarian one with sheep grazing in the adjacent paddocks. (Child, Mark 2013)

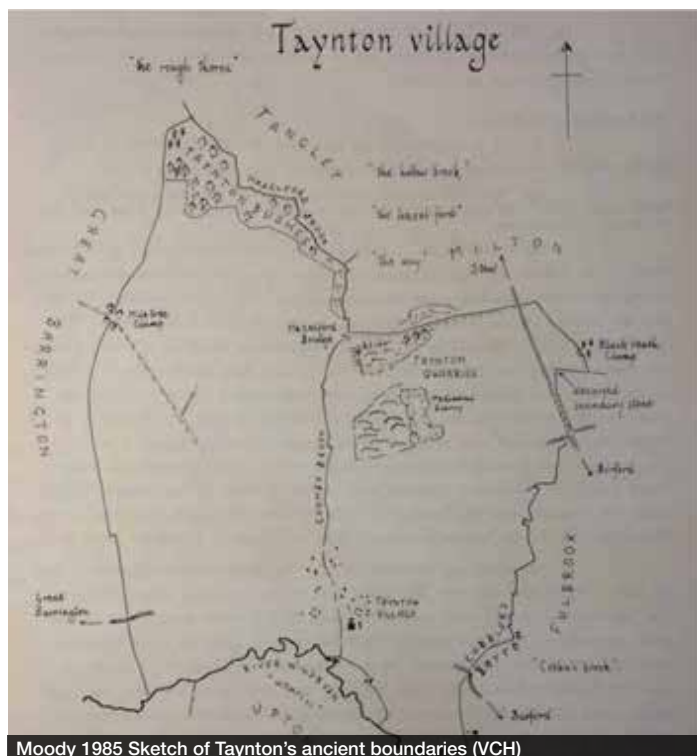
Collectively, Taynton’s stone buildings form a recognizable and distinctive vernacular style of architecture that communicates its affinity with the traditions of the local context... They reflect a broader homogeneity in the regional character of the Windrush Valley defining the ‘stony landscape’ observed across villages such as Asthall Swinbrook, Widford and Burford (almost all which had their own quarry) by 20th century travellers such as J. Massingham.

## TAYNTON MANOR & VILLAGE: A BRIEF ACCOUNT

The village of Taynton lies about a mile from the Oxfordshire border with Gloucestershire - approximately a mile and a half north west of Burford along a lane that leads to the Gloucestershire village of Great Barrington in the Windrush Valley. (Oxfordshire villages. Taynton. <http://www.oxfordshirevillages.co.uk/westoxonvillages/taynton.html>) Its name, referred to variously as Teinton (1086); Teynton (c1274-9), is thought to reflect its sitting along the River Windrush - with the first element possibly referring to the river name Teigne as in Teignmouth (Devon). (Alexander H. 1912. "Taynton" in *The Place-Names of Oxfordshire: Their Origin and Development*. The Clarendon Press; Oxford. P. 205

For much of its history Taynton has remained a small dispersed farming community under manorial control. (West Oxfordshire District Council. Taynton. Conservation Area Character Appraisal. p.2) The earliest account of Taynton Manor is a 1059 Charter – confirmed by King William in 1069 - recording Edward the Confessor's gift of the Manor to the Abbey of Saint Denis (Denys), Paris. The arrangement however is not one that would survive the hostilities between England and France and the manor would subsequently pass into the monastery at Tewksbury before falling into private hands at the Dissolution. (Child, Mark 2013)

While it is not known how Taynton came to be in the king's hands, the Charter, which included a survey drawn up on the ground, is a useful record of Taynton's boundaries as they existed at the time and suggests as Moody (1985:14) argues, that the holding functioned a single 'working estate.' The latter included a moor, woodland and pasture grounds, though it is not clear whether the 'estate' also included a manor house. Its riverside pastures are of particular interest being quite different from those of neighbouring villages "in both separation and extent." (Moody Raymond 1985. *The Ancient Boundaries of Taynton*. Tolsey Papers No. 5. The Tolsey Museum; Burford. Oxford History Centre Reference: TAYN 944(MOO). p 14



The early settlement pattern was influenced by Taynton's relatively enclosed topography and rich pasture. This was an informal and dispersed settlement pattern, typical of the wider area, though it initially concentrated along the route linking Burford to Great Barrington. "The meadowland along the Windrush beyond the village provided pasture for flocks, while the dispersed form of Taynton encompassed a pattern of minor fields and smallholdings that is still discernible" today. The plough land was largely concentrated on the slopes above the village. (West Oxfordshire District Council. Taynton. Conservation Area Character Appraisal. P 2)

Taynton would next appear in the Domesday Book in 1086 as one of 3 English and 2 French abbeys that held land directly from the King in Oxfordshire. At the time its particulars listed are comprised of 10 hides; land for 15 ploughs- 4 of which were in the demesne; 2 mills; 170 acres of meadows; 1 by 1 1/2 leagues of pasture; and 1 by 4 furlong of woodland. All of which was valued at £15. The population, relatively small, comprised of 4 slaves; 17 villeins; 30 bordars.

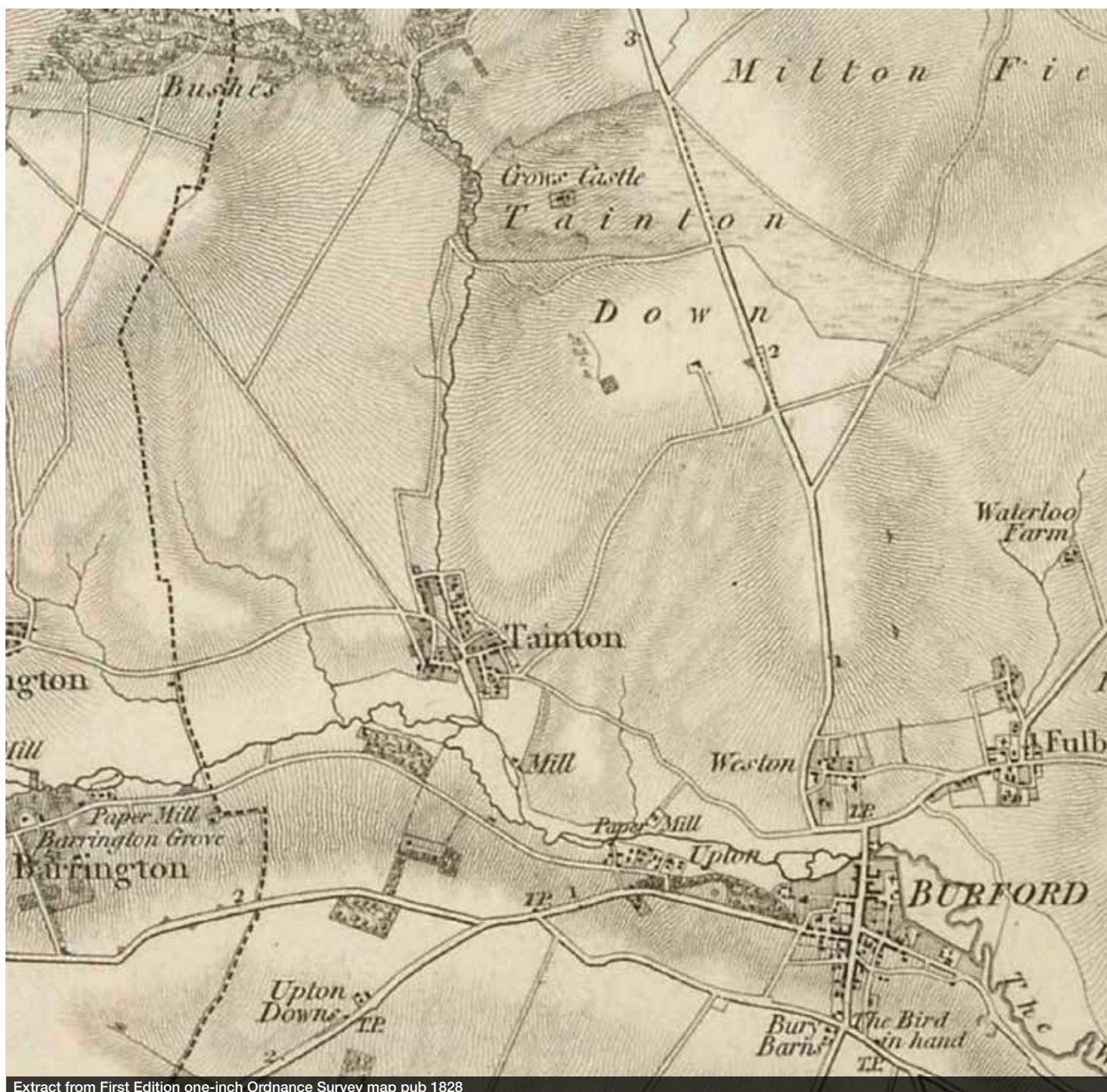
There is nothing in the Domesday Survey to suggest that Taynton practiced anything else other than the normal midland open field agriculture of the time. (Moody, R 1985, p.14) The area was also served by important trade routes, including the Saxon route. By the Middle Ages these routes and proximity to Burford's markets and traders would prove central to its prosperity and development.

By the 16th century the manor had passed from monastic control to the crown. Court Rolls produced during this time (c1540) show around 15 tenants with smallholdings, identifying themselves as the tenants of a farmer, Ralph Norwood. (Hone N. J 1906. "Court Rolls of Taynton, Oxon" in *Manor and Manorial Records*. Methuen P.168) The Rolls also indicate that a number of buildings in the village were in need some repairs at this time, a factor that likely underpins the building activity that would characterise the village in the subsequent 17th century period. At the time of the Dissolution, the manor was in the hands of an Edmund Harman. (Conservation Area Character Appraisal. P.2)

There was significant building carried out in the 17th and 18th centuries, with many of the village's buildings dating to this period, though much of this work appears to relate to rebuilding on existing plots, rather than expansion of the village. During this period, whilst alternative building materials were becoming more easily available there is a continuity in the use of local stone: limestone from the village quarry, with rubble and squared limestone used in humbler buildings and ashlar employed for those of higher status. Most were of stone slate roofs though some were of thatch as is evident in certain survivals today. This is a consistent story with other villages in the Windrush Valley, which all had their local quarries and strongly defines the sense of place.

Many of these new buildings drew on the vernacular tradition although by the 18th century Taynton appears to have witnessed a sustained period of gentrification, drawing on more classical influences and contemporary architectural trends, but with stone mullion windows with hoods and doorways with stone hoods on brackets being typical features. (Conservation Area Character Appraisal, p 2) These houses were scattered along the lanes that each terminate with one of the





Extract from First Edition one-inch Ordnance Survey map pub 1828

four large farms. The 19th century layout and extent still roughly corresponded to the 1059 survey. The village stayed more or less the same size, just more houses.

The 19th century Manor was held by George Talbot Rice, Lord Dynevor, who at the time of enclosure (c1822) owned much of the land around Tainton. There was little infill or change in the dispersed character of the settlement throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. John Marius Wilson, writing in the late 19th century, observed that there were 83 houses at the time and relatively small population of 341 inhabitants. (Wilson John Marius. 1870-72. Imperial Gazetteer of England and Wales. Cited in Vision of Britain. <http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/place/10231>)

Although there have been a number of new structures the scope of this new building work "has been restricted to an extension of existing structures." (Conservation Area Character Appraisal, p.3) There were four bungalows built by the local council in the 20th century.

The Conservation Area Appraisal describing the modern village as a "time capsule," largely unchanged since the 18th century improvements. Moody (1985:15) has suggested that the relative consistency may be related to its stone quarry, whose historic significance ensured the stability of manorial ownership and perhaps a certain 'conservativeness' in the development and overall management of the village's affairs.



Postcard Taynton showing the architectural character of the village

## FORMER TAYNTON FARMSTEAD

Until post WWII, Mead House and the adjoining farmstead were known as Taynton Farm. A Heritage Report for Mead House, Worlledge Associates, April 2018, established that the rear wing to Mead House dates from the 17th century, with the 1822 Enclosure Map showing a farmhouse and three farm buildings to the west and south west within an enclosed yard.

It is not known what the extent of the farm was at the time of the enclosure in 1822. It immediately adjoined Allotments 10, to the west and south, which extended to 140a 1r 22p. The enclosure resulted in the 6 larger allotments listed as Lord Dynever Freehold, totalling 1367a 3r 2p, and 4 other substantial allotments totalling 285a 1r 3p being divided into or between 4 substantial farms in the village.

In the 1851 census return for the village, five people identify themselves as farmers of 499a, 583a, 375a, 480a and 80a, totalling 2017a. It is likely, however, that some of the land being farmed lay in adjoining parishes.

Taynton Farm, identified through newspaper reports, which named the tenant, and cross checked with census, was the largest farm created after the 1822 enclosure at 583 acres. A comparison between the 1910 valuation plan which identified all the fields being farmed and the 1822 enclosure demonstrates that it comprised all of allotments 9 - 293a 1r 18p and 8 - 267a 0r 20p and only parts of allotment 10 which lie immediately to the west. Other farms were formed or expanded using the boundaries of the allotment on the 1822 plan.

The acreages of three of the major farms have changed from the 1851 census, although the valuation book only counted land within the parish. In the case of Taynton Farm, the reduction was only 4 acres from 1851

This expansion of the holdings and creation of a substantial farm



1822 Enclosure Award Map showing the substantial unenclosed allotments

holding is likely to have prompted the re-building of the farmhouse, documented in the Mead House Heritage Report, Worlledge Associates, April 2018, and the expansion of the farmstead.

It also resulted in the construction of a separate farmstead with a pair of cottages at the junction of the road running along the north side of allotment 9 where it meets the road running north along the eastern boundary of allotment 8.



## EVOLUTION OF THE FARMYARD

The early 19th century house and farmstead was part of lands held by George Talbot-Rice, Lord Dynevor and the site, at the time of the enclosure (c1822), is shown as a collection of scattered buildings, rounding off the built development at south-west corner of the village, accessed from within the village.

The layout of the site, with its separation of the house from the yard and a new separate northern access outside the village, was most likely part of the mid-19th century improvements that followed in the wake of evolving ideas on farmstead layouts.

### 1822 MAP



Extract from the 1822 Enclosure Map showing Taynton Farmhouse coloured red and farm buildings, with an L-shaped range to the west, with the distinctive outline of a barn (Standing Barn) further to the west and a single long range to the south. The boundary of the yard is hard up against the western and southern side of the barn

By the mid-19th century, there were a number of changes to the layout of the site, made predominantly with thoughts towards improving the designed relationship between its buildings. A north-west approach drive was created separating the main house and the 'working yard.' This approach added status, elevating it from that of a working farm and, associated with the new classical front range to the farmhouse, gave it the air of a mini country house.

The pink indicates stone/brick buildings, the grey probably timber. This shows the extension to the farmhouse with a garden separate from the farmyard. This has resulted in the demolition of the L-shaped range to the west of the house. The farmstead has been extended to the west and a new stone granary constructed. The simple long building to the south of the farmhouse has been extended with a substantial extension to the west end. Timber ranges have been added to the south with enclosed pens. A new timber range has been constructed along the southern boundary of the farmyard.

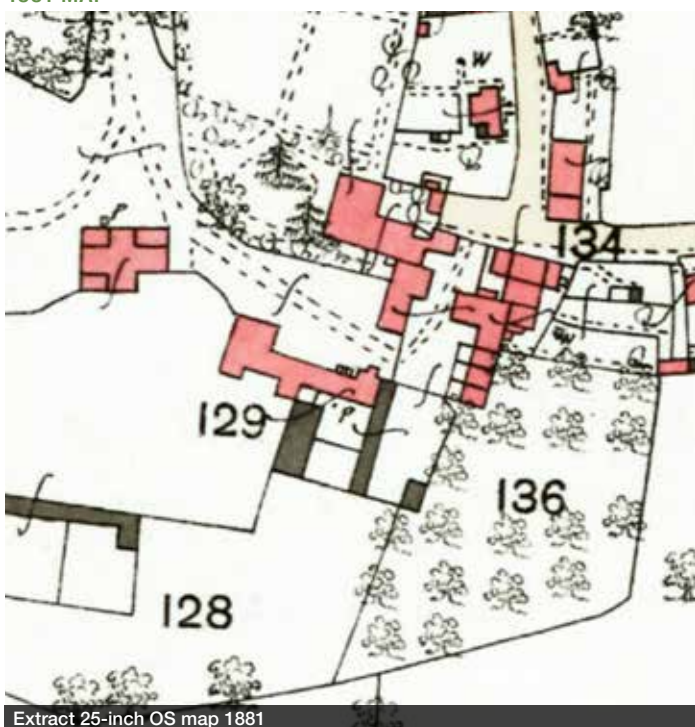
In addition to the expansion of the main yards a separate small farmstead had been created at the northern end of the holding, comprising a pair of cottages and a farmstead with a stone barn, and an L-shaped range of stone and timber buildings.

The expansion of the main farmstead took place soon after the 1822 enclosure. The granary, in particular would have been a valuable addition to the farmstead to hold the increased grain, and is likely to have occurred relatively soon after the creation of the enlarged farm.

The 1851, 1861 and 1871 census returns list Mr Joseph Lousley as the tenant farmer. He describes himself as follows:

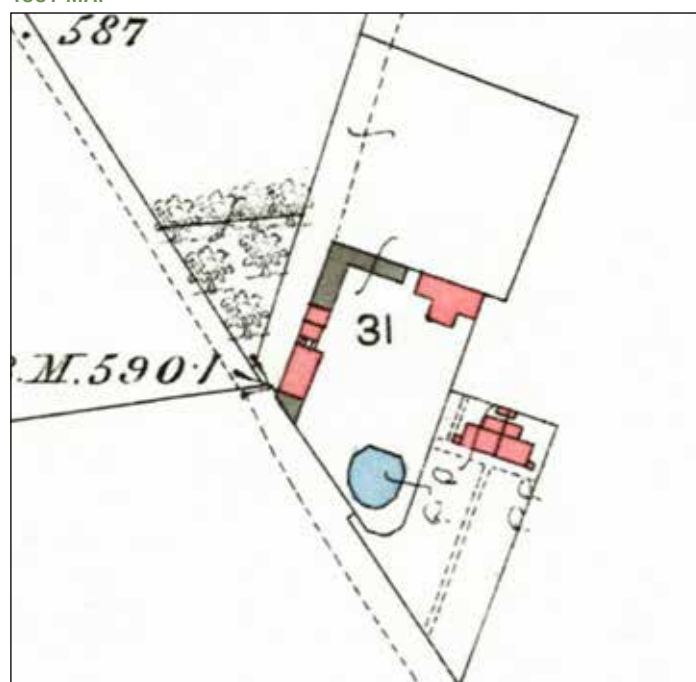
1851	Farmer 583 acres 19 men 9 boys
1861	Farmer 583 acres employing 12 men and 9 boys
1871	Farmer 585a 8 men 2 women 6 boys

### 1881 MAP



Extract 25-inch OS map 1881

### 1881 MAP



Extract from 25-inch OS 1881 showing the separate small farmstead to the north of Taynton Farm serving the northern part of the 583 a farm holding

Joseph Lousley gave up the farm in the middle of June 1876, with the Oxford Weekly News (21 June 1876) announcing the sale of horses, mares and farming implements, including 'mowing machine, reaping machine, winnowing machine, weighing machine and weights, bushel corn sieves, iron harrows.'

In the 1881 and 1891 census a Henry J Houlton is at Taynton Farm. In 1881 he describes himself as Farmer 572 acres 12 men, 2 women and 5 boys, in 1891 just as a farmer with no details. In 1901 he describes himself as a retired farmer, with his son also Henry J Houlton 28 being the Farmer, and his brother Ernest 24, Manager of farm.

The layout is similar to the 1881 plan, although the building along the southern boundary, identified as being of timber on the 1881 plan, appears to have been replaced with a larger building, constructed in stone, and a new range has been constructed to the south of the granary to join the southern range. The dotted notation along the east face of the new infill range, and the south face of the southern range

#### 1898 MAP



Extract from 25-inch OS map revised 1898

#### 1919 MAP



Extract from 25-inch OS map revised 1919. This shows almost no changes to the 1898 layout

suggest open frontages.

While the buildings provide clues to the type of farming undertaken at Taynton Farm, predominantly mixed, no details have been located of production. In 1902 Mr Houlton left the farm, and on 13 September the Oxford Journal (page 6) advertised for auction 'Live and Deas farming Stock'. This included 496 good cross-bred sheep; 27 short horn cattle; 12 cart horses, and 'a large assortment of agricultural implements.

It appears that a Mr Charles Broad took the tenancy of Taynton Farm. He is listed in the 1911 census but is noted as dying in 1915. (Oxfordshire Weekly News - 17 November 1915 page 3) No details have been located of the subsequent tenant farmer.

In September 1936 the then tenant of the farm and Mr H J Wilkins, who was leaving the farm, advertised for sale his stock and farming implements, comprising '250 Oxford Hampshire sheep; 66 shorthorn and cross-bred cattle, 4 horses; 12 pigs and 50 head of poultry, plus implements, and 40 lots of household furniture. (The Tewkesbury Register, and Agricultural Gazette. - Saturday 19 September 1936 page 5)

On 12 September 1955 Taynton Farmhouse (1183503) and a group of barns to the west (1053418) were included in the Statutory Register of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest. In 1989 the address descriptions were amended. (See Appendix 1)

In 1966 a Mr and Mrs Robert Garne are noted as living at Taynton Farm (The Tewkesbury Register, and Agricultural Gazette. - Friday 21 October 1966 page 12) In 1967 Taynton Farmhouse, renamed Mead House, and an adjoining cottage was sold.

The subdivision of the farmstead perhaps prompted by the decline of the agricultural economy and amalgamation of farms reflected a wider thematic re-purposing of farm buildings across the Cotswolds during the subsequent decades of the 20th century and into the 21st. Popular during this time was the country house and living ideal, thwarted only by the costs of running large country estates. Marketing Mead House appears to be offering the perfect solution, targeting city gentlemen seeking the 'country-house lifestyle' - with its attendant sporting pursuits such as hunting - but without the expense of maintaining a large country house estate. The sale of the farmhouse contributed to the farm yard buildings becoming redundant.

#### 1967 MAP



Extract from 1967 sales plan for Mead House formerly Taynton Farmhouse. The farmhouse and farm buildings become separated at this date



1975



Aerial image showing the farmstead layout. Note the yard between the Standing Barn and the cart lodge and granary is open providing evidence that the current walled enclosure post-dated 1975. There is a low wall enclosing a yard to the rear of the south range



Standing Barn: Date of buildings. Pre 1822 (red) 1822-1881 (blue) 1881-1898 (yellow)

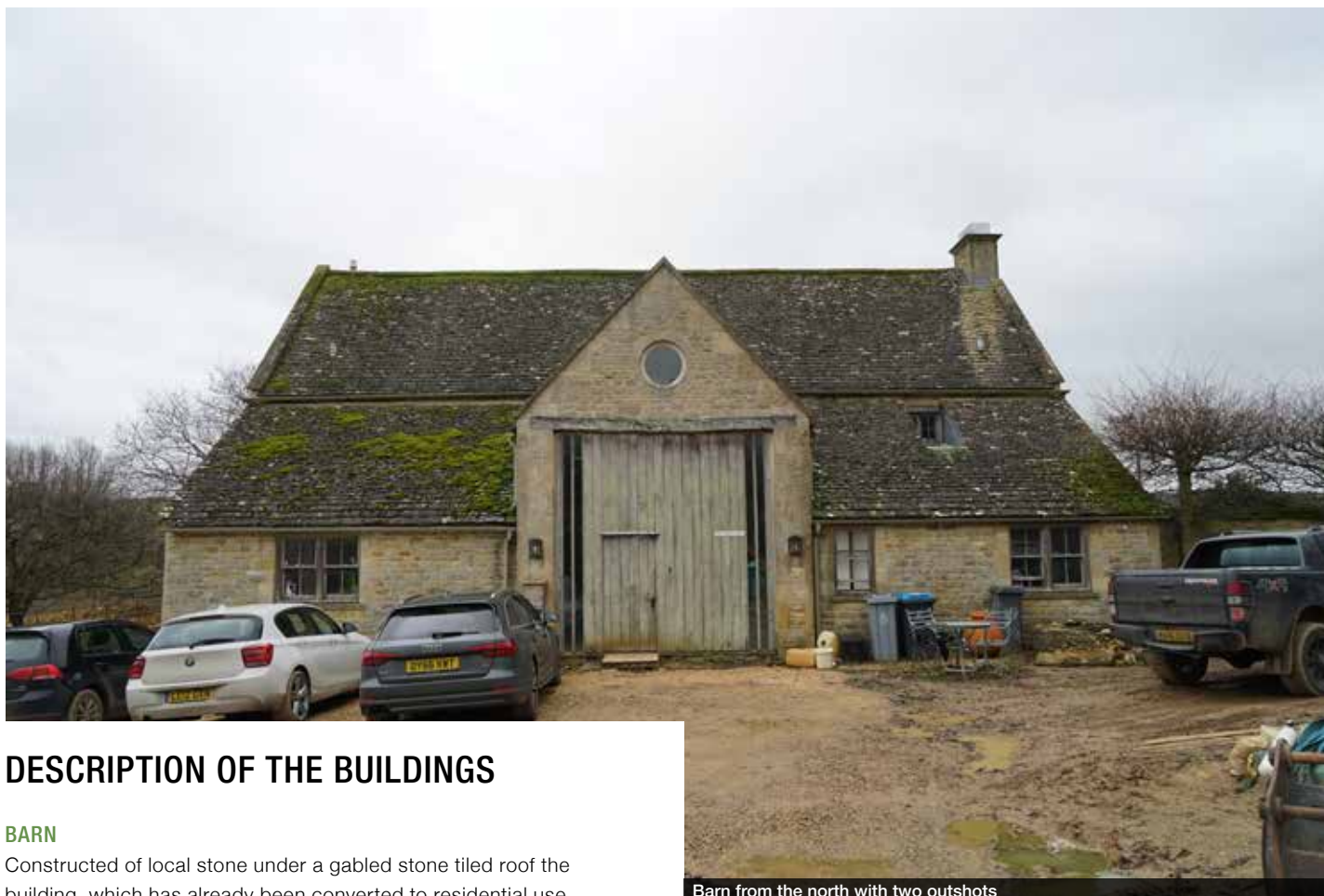


Site location plan from planning application 18/02762/HHD – West Oxfordshire DC website. Note the southern range partly removed by this date

### RECENT HISTORY

It is understood that in the 1980s planning approval was granted to restore and convert the long farm building shown on the 1822 Enclosure map which was subsequently extended as shown on the 1881 and later 25-inch plans to a residential use – now called the Long Barn. In November 2018 planning approval was granted for further extensions and alterations (Ref: 18/02762/HHD)

The barn shown on the 1822 Enclosure map was also converted to residential use and is now called the Standing Barn. In 2017, planning approval was granted for Erection of dry-stone walls and post and rail fencing to The Mead House, The Long Barn and The Standing Barn. (ref: 17/01827/HHD)



Barn from the north with two outshots

## DESCRIPTION OF THE BUILDINGS

### BARN

Constructed of local stone under a gabled stone tiled roof the building, which has already been converted to residential use, comprises 5 bays with a midstrey or wagon porch to both the south side and one to the north with outshot or lean-to roof additions either side. It has a number of 'domestic' looking windows to the north, south and east elevations installed as part of the conversion. Internally the spaces have been subdivided with only a small part of the midstrey retained as a double height space.



Threshing barn (Standing Barn) from the south within the farmstead





East elevation



West elevation





Internal view looking north with exposed framing to central bay

#### FORMER CART LODGE AND GRANARY

Constructed of stone under a gabled stone tiled roof the building comprises six bays, with five bays open to the east delineated by stone columns, with the sixth bay at the northern end enclosed. At the northern end of the building is an external stone staircase of 13 steps leading to a timber door with fanlight over, providing access to a granary which runs over three of the bays.



Northern end of cart lodge with granary over showing the steps to the granary





The north and western side wall with the buildings to the southern end stepping down the slope



Eastern side showing the six-bays. The northern bay is only partly open inside. The first-floor granary spans across the three northern bays





Interior looking north showing the stone bases, columns and pads, with beams spanning from above the columns to the rear wall. An infilled framed wall on the third bay encloses the first-floor granary



View of the roof framing looking north and inside the granary looking south. A double through side purlin roof with substantial principal rafters on each bay and a ridge board. A number of raised collars have later been inserted between the lower and upper purlins. On a number of the principal trusses





View of the surviving grain bins

The granary retains a number of grain bins along the western side wall.

A stone wall links the western side of the barn to the northern end of the cart lodge and granary. This post-dated 1975

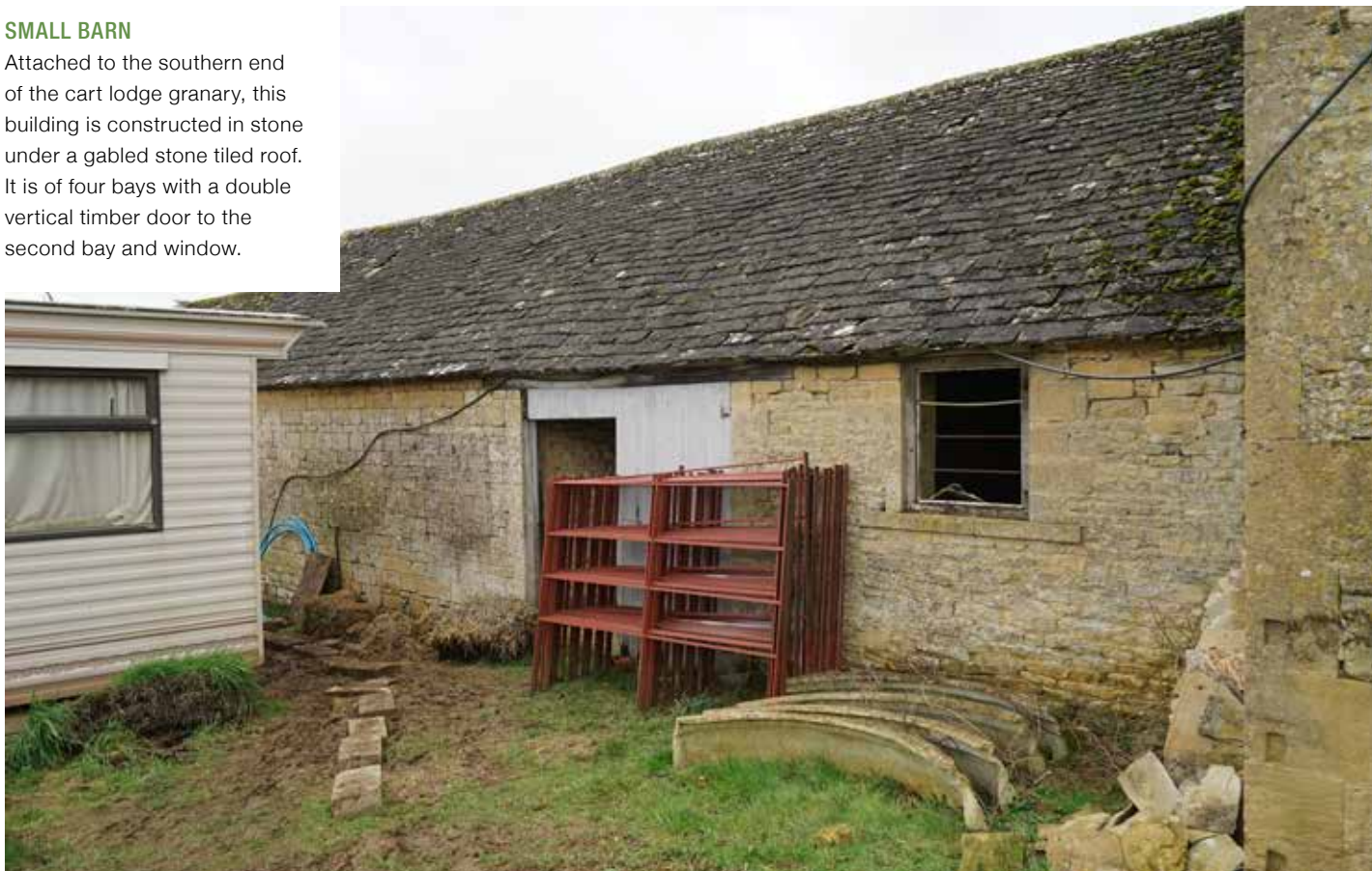


Stone wall linking the barn to the granary with beech trees made into a hedge above – viewed from the north



**SMALL BARN**

Attached to the southern end of the cart lodge granary, this building is constructed in stone under a gabled stone tiled roof. It is of four bays with a double vertical timber door to the second bay and window.



View of the small barn attached to the southern end of the cart lodge and granary building



View of the barn with the end wall of the cart lodge granary





The roof construction is typical 19th century King-post truss with queen-struts to the principal rafters. The purlins are not framed into the trusses but lodged (and presumably attached) on a bracket attached to the outside face of the truss upon which the purlins are lodged. This results in the purlins being staggered. This roof construction is used on all the mid-late 19th century buildings in the farmstead with the exception of the cart lodge and granary, (supporting the view this is an earlier building, probably erected relatively soon after the 1822 enclosure and establishment of the enlarged farm).

Interior showing the roof construction and confirming its post 1822 construction



### OPEN CART LODGES

To the south, and stepping down the slope, there are two stone cart lodge of four bays each opening to the east side with timber supports.



The first of two open cart lodge ranges running south from the small barn



Interior showing the same roof framing. The open bays to the east temporarily enclosed allowing the use of the space as a workshop being used for the repair of buildings within the farmstead





View of the second range of open cart lodges set below the roof line of the first showing re-tiling of the end bay



Interior showing the same roof construction



### BARN AND ANIMAL SHELTER

Attached to the southern end of the barn and cart lodge range and running west to east is the remains of a once longer farm building, (shown on plans and extant on 1975 aerials) with the full extent marked by low walls at the eastern end.

Constructed of stone under a gabled stone tile roof the building comprises eight bays (originally twelve) with gabled roof wing extending to the north, which was originally central to the range. There are stone cross-walls at bay one working west to east,

fourth bay and eight bays. Seven of the bays are open to the south supported on timber iron columns. The enclosed walls to the south shown on various plans and sub-division of the yard suggest this was once an open sided animal shelter. It replaced a timber structure in the same location.

There is an enclosed paddock to the south with stone walls. This building has fallen into a considerable state of disrepair but is undergoing repairs. (See Gazette Appendix 2)



View of the south range from the NE showing the cart lodge attached to the western end of the south range





The range from the east showing the surviving stone gable of the now reduced southern range and the projecting northern wing



View of the south side of the range showing the open sides to a formerly enclosed yard





Detail of the King-post truss with the attached bracket supporting the purlins, which are staggered. The trusses and principal rafters are in softwood and narrower than in the other buildings suggesting a later date for this range, which replaced a timber range in the same location

### SETTING

The buildings have an open farmyard setting, but also sit within a the broader landscape setting on the southern edge of the village.



View of the farmstead from the north showing is broader landscape setting with open fields to the west and south





View of the range of buildings stepping down the gradient

## HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

Significance is defined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Annex as comprising:

“The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting.”

Placing a building in its historical context and describing its characteristics and appearance is an important component of the evidence gathering exercise to inform understanding of a place’s significance and contribution of its setting. As Historic England explains in ‘Conservation Principles’ (2008) understanding how a place has evolved and how different phases add to or detract from its significance is a part of that exercise.

As Historic England explains in ‘Conservation Principles’ (2008), understanding how a place has evolved and how different phases add to or detract from its significance is a part of that exercise. Heritage significance can be defined as using Evidential, Historical, Aesthetic and Communal Values.

This part of the report will examine the former Taynton Farmstead in the broader context of farmsteads and farm buildings in the Cotswolds and drawing on the history and description of the surviving buildings draft a Statement of Significance for the whole farm.

### CHARACTERISTICS OF HISTORIC FARMSTEADS COTSWOLDS

English Heritage in its publication *Historic Farmsteads: Preliminary Characterisation* in discussing Farmstead Types writes;

Farmsteads perform several basic functions: providing shelter for farmers and their families; the housing and processing of crops; the storage of vehicles, implements and fodder; the management and accommodation of livestock. Building functions can be usefully distinguished between crop processing and storage (barns, hay barns, cider houses, oast houses and farm maltings, granaries) and the accommodation of animals (cow houses and shelter sheds, ox houses, stables, pigsties) and birds (dovecots and poultry houses). These functions can either be accommodated within individual specialist structures or combined with others into multifunctional ranges. (‘Historic Farmsteads: Preliminary Characterisation’ English Heritage, The Countryside Agency, University of Gloucestershire, 2006, p 24)

English Heritage notes ‘The scale and form of farmstead plan types are subject to much variation and are closely related to farm size and status, terrain and land use... small farms in the South East and East Anglia were characterised by detached houses and separate buildings, often loosely arranged around the side of a yard. (Historic Farmsteads: Preliminary Characterisation, p. 7)

English Heritage also published ‘Character Statements’, for a number of Regions, including one for the South West, which includes the Cotswolds area. It makes the following observations on the character of this area.

Thin, well-aerated, brashy soils derived from limestone are common on the plateau and steeper slopes, particularly to the west. More fertile, deeper, clayey soils of alluvial origin are present along the valley floors and on lower-lying land to the south and east. The decline of open-field agriculture, evident by the late 14th century, was followed in many areas by the conversion of common-field arable into open pasture for grazing sheep; the major exception to this was the scarp slopes and the steeper valleys around Stroud where a more pastorally based cattle economy continued within the framework of anciently enclosed fields. By the 17th century sheep rearing was concentrated in the north and cloth-making to the south. The next major phase in the arable exploitation of the Cotswold’s was linked to the agricultural improvements of the 18th and 19th centuries, when much of the high plateau was enclosed. (Historic Farmsteads: Preliminary Characterisation, South West Regions p.32)

In discussing the role of farmsteads and farmstead types, it comments that they;

‘Perform several basic functions: providing shelter for farmers and their families; the housing and processing of crops; the storage of vehicles, implements and fodder; the management and accommodation of livestock [...] The great diversity of farmstead plans provides a very direct reflection of the degree to which these farm-based functions are located in specialist or combination structures and ranges [...] The resulting diversity of form and scale is the direct outcome of the significant variation in farming practice and size that occurs both over time and from place to place’ (p. 38) and that

Generally, larger holdings were more likely to be provided with larger and/or more buildings. In the 18th and 19th centuries, the ‘contemporary rule of thumb was that a man was needed for every 25 or 30 acres of arable and every 50 or 60 of pasture’ [...] By the 1850s, medium-size farms – typically mixed arable holdings – were between 100 and 299 acres and occupied nearly half of England’s acreage.(p. 42)

Taynton Farm existing in 1822, but considerably expanded following the enclosure in 1822, was recorded in the 1851 census as 585 acres. It remained this size through the 19th century, with the 1910 valuation noting 579 acres. In terms of employment the 1851-1881 census for provide the following details;

1851	19 men 9 boys
1861	12 men and 9 boys
1871	8 men 2 women 6 boys
1881	12 men, 2 women and 5 boys

### FARMSTEAD LAYOUT

In relation to Taynton Farm, the 1822 plan show It reflects a regular courtyard plan, but with only a barn and two other ranges. By 1881 additional buildings were added including a granary and a range enclosing the southern side. Between 1881 and 1898 the western side of the yard was enclosed by a range of buildings creating a more formal courtyard:



Formal courtyard layouts, where the barns, stables, feed stores and cattle shelters were ranged around a yard and carefully placed in relation to one another in order to minimise the waste of labour, and where the manure could be conserved, were recommended from the mid-18th century and many are documented from this period, although no surviving groups can be dated before the 1790s. The earlier examples are courtyard or U-plan with the barn forming the central block, and shelter sheds, stables and enclosed cow houses the two side wings. The fourth side could be no more than a wall with a gateway or contain further sheds or smaller buildings such as pigsties or be distinguished by a house (usually looking away from the yard). (Historic Farmsteads: Preliminary Characterisation, South West Regions)

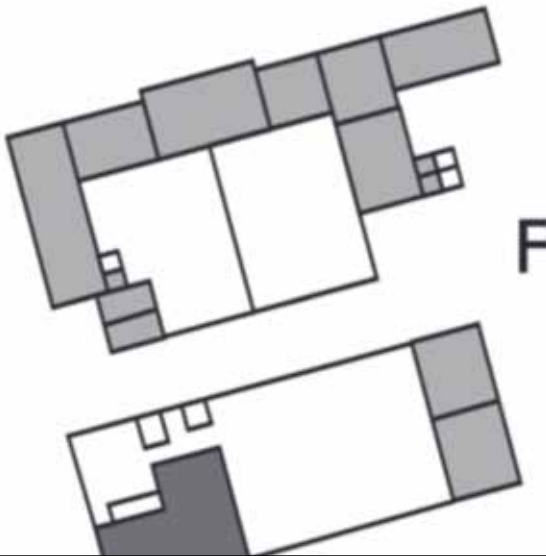


Diagram of a regular courtyard plan (Historic Farmsteads: Preliminary Characterisation, South West Region, Figure 15, page 39)

## FARM BUILDINGS

In relation to the surviving traditional farm buildings, the Preliminary Character Statement;

In the traditional arable areas of Wiltshire and Dorset and in the Cotswolds, farmsteads are usually dominated by one, two and sometimes three large barns. Lean-tos for cattle, either original or later additions, are common, and one end of the barn is sometimes partitioned off for a lofted stable or cow house... In the Cotswolds the prevalence of good building stone means that most barns are stone-built; they are typically of five bays with a central threshing floor.

The farmstead by 1881 included a barn and granary over a cart lodge and range of buildings to the southern side of the yard and a long barn. These buildings in the farmstead do not appear sufficient for a 583-acre farm, but as noted, a separate small enclosed farmstead, with a barn and other buildings, serviced by a pair of workers cottages was constructed to the north of Taynton Farm serving a large portion of the farm.

Granaries were important components of the farm for future crops but also feed. The Preliminary Character Statement in discussing granaries, comments:

Once threshed, grain needed to be stored away from damp and vermin. It would be sold off the farm or retained for animal feed [...] Grain was typically accommodated in the lofts of farmhouses, a

practice common before 1750. A separate external stair often gave access to the granary door.

Later, granaries became separate buildings, but were often sited close to the farmhouse, due to the value of the contents. The cart lodge granary at Taynton, constructed post 1822, is two-storey with open cart lodge to the ground step access to the northern end giving access to a small granary at first floor

The majority of the buildings are constructed using local stone for the walls, with mostly timber roof framing and stone slates.

The farm buildings at Taynton Farm were included in the statutory list in 1955. The list description reads:

Cartshed and granary. Probably early C19. Stone coursed rubble; stone slate roof. Single storey and attic; 5-bay range. Bay divisions marked by round stone columns. Trenched purlin roof visible to left end. Granary to right end of roof. Interior not inspected but noted as retaining grain bins. Attached L-shaped range of shelter sheds and outbuildings. Stone coursed rubble; stone slate roofs. Single-storey, approximately 15-bay range. C19 king-post roofs to parts.

Research for this report identified that the cart lodge granary post-dates 1822, although it is likely to have been constructed soon after, with the range running south from the cart lodge granary post-dating 1881.

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Having regard to the historical research, the contextual information from the Historic Farmsteads: Preliminary Character Statement; South East and South West Regions, and the surviving physical evidence the heritage significance of the former farmstead to Taynton Farm can be summarized as follows.

The surviving vernacular stone farm buildings, dating from pre 1822 to late 19th century, comprising a barn (since converted) cart lodge and granary, small barn, open cart shed, animal sheds provides physical evidence of the range of buildings required, supplemented by a separate farmstead at the northern end of the holding, to serve 583 acres mixed arable farm, that was typical of many medium farms in the 17th through to second quarter of the 20th century in this part of the Oxfordshire.

The removal of a buildings within the farmyard, and conversion to residential use of the two barns, (Long and Standing Barns) provides evidence of the changes in farming in the post WWII period, making these traditional vernacular buildings redundant for modern farming, and the lack of resources available to maintain these buildings without providing alternative uses.

As a result of the 1822 enclosure Taynton Farm which comprised a 17th century farmhouse, traditional barn and two other buildings became a 583-acre holding. This resulted in considerable investment with an enlarged farmhouse, additional building in the farmstead, and establishment of a separate farmstead in the northern half of the farm. The surviving farmstead dating from pre-1822, with 1822-81, and 1881-98 ranges of buildings, together with the former farmhouse (Mead House), are historically significant in demonstrating the impact on farming following enclosure.



The use of local stone in its construction contributes to the wider local character and sense of distinctiveness, maintaining a clear visual relationship between the farmyard buildings, the adjoining houses (Mead House and Long Barn) and the landscape within which it has developed and helping to place the building geographically;

The buildings in the farmyard, all being constructed in local stone, comprise aesthetically pleasing traditional vernacular farm buildings. The use of local materials contributes to local distinctiveness and helps to place the group geographically.

The farm building by reason of their traditional form and materials and grouping, make an aesthetically pleasing contribution to the rural character and appearance of this part of the Oxfordshire Cotswolds.

The surviving farmyard and buildings (together with Mead House and Long Barn) instils a sense of local identity, and a well understood aspect of the landscape of the Parish of Taynton, of a former medium-large sized farm, reflective of importance of farming to the historic development and economic well-being of this part of the Oxfordshire.

While the pre-1822 barn has subsequently been converted to a residential use, it adds to the group value of the remaining buildings forming the farmstead.

#### RELATIONSHIP TO THE TAYNTON CONSERVATION AREA

The farmstead to the former Taynton Farm lies within the boundaries of the Taynton Conservation Area designated in 1970.

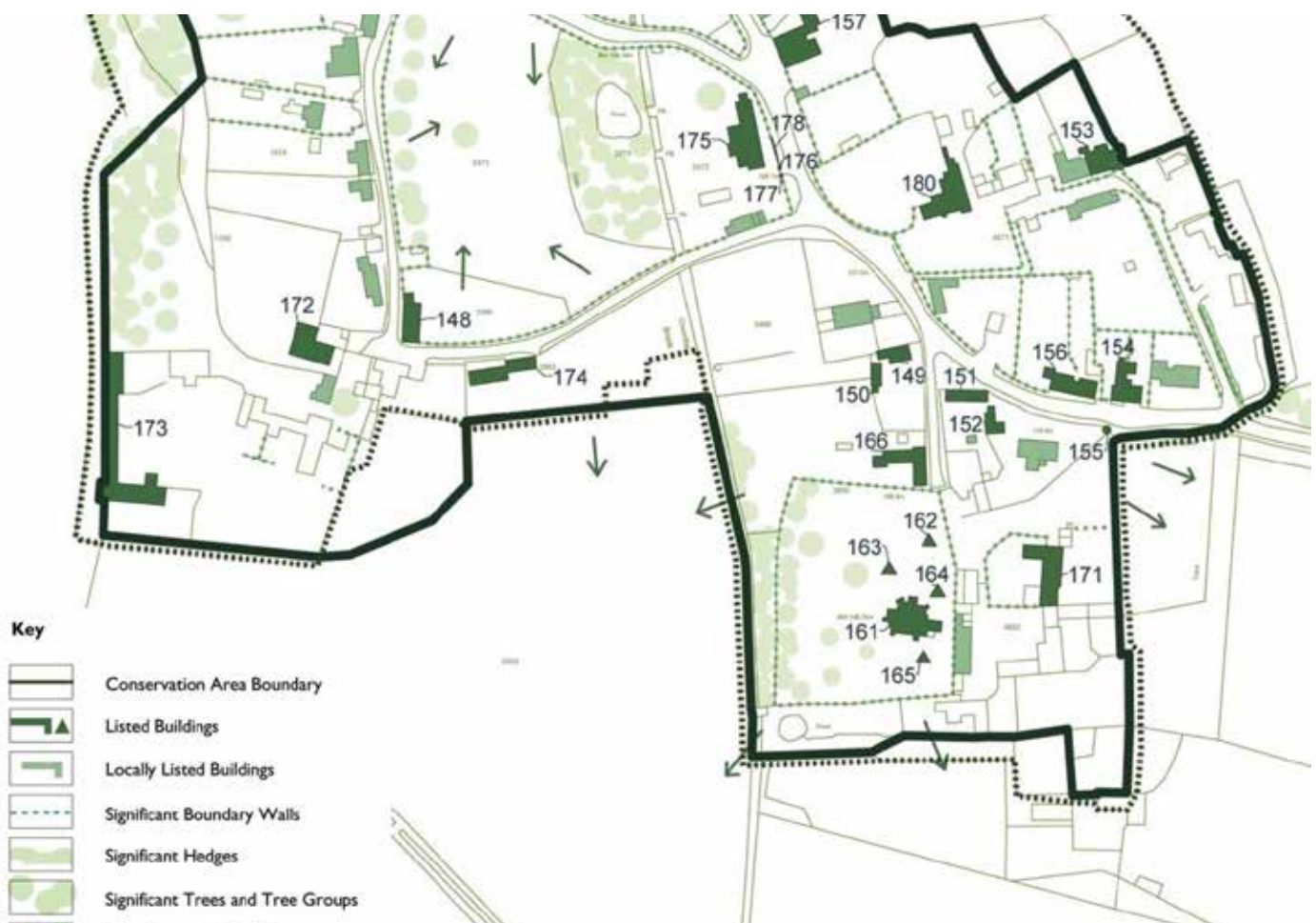
The Conservation Area Character Appraisal provides a brief history of Taynton, and its settlement pattern, and assessment of its Architectural character and quality buildings. It refers to:

The consistent use of the fine, indigenous limestone gives Taynton a pleasingly harmonious appearance. Most of the houses and cottages date from the 17th and 18th centuries and employ the local limestone in courses: rubble and squared in the humbler properties, and ashlar in those of a higher status. Roofs are predominantly of stone slate with stone stacks, and many have gables and gabled windows...

The four principal farms - the most notable of which is Lower Farm, with its array of outbuildings - are major components of the character area, forming clusters that serve to define the extent of the settlement, and remind us of the importance of agriculture in the village's history.

Limestone walling forms the most conspicuous boundary feature in Taynton and varies in height and composition throughout the village.

The early to later 19th century group of traditional vernacular farm building set around three side of a yard, and constructed of local stone for the walls and roofs, with the western side of the range of four joined buildings stepping down the slope, make a historical, and aesthetic contribution to the character of Taynton Conservation Area. The historic and architectural integrity of 'Standing Barn' has been eroded by the details of its conversion, though clearly the re-purposing has helped safeguard its future and that of the group.





The modern wall and landscaping connecting the granary to Standing Barn

## HERITAGE MANAGEMENT POLICIES

Conservation principles, policy and practice seek to preserve and enhance the value of heritage assets. With the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in February 2019 the Government has re-affirmed its aim that the historic environment and its heritage assets should be conserved and enjoyed for the quality of life they bring to this and future generations.

The former Farm buildings adjoining Mead House (formerly Taynton Farm) are grade II listed building and lie within the Taynton Conservation Area and thus a designated heritage asset.

In relation to development affecting a designated heritage asset the NPPF states in paragraph 193 that:

When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

Clarifying in paragraph 194 that:

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

The Planning Practice Guidance (March 2014) provides advice on assessing the impact of proposals explaining that what matters in assessing the level of harm (if any) is the degree of impact on the significance of the asset. It states:

In determining whether works to a listed building (or its setting) constitute substantial harm, an important consideration would be whether the adverse impact seriously affects a key element of its special architectural or historic interest. **It is the degree of harm to the asset's significance rather than the scale of the development that is to be assessed.** [Emphasis added]



The NPPF explains in paragraphs 195 and 196 the differences between 'substantial' harm and 'less than substantial' harm, advising that any harm should be justified by the public benefit of a proposal. Local planning policies carry a similar message, seeking to resist development that would cause harm to designated heritage assets and the character of an area.

Specifically paragraph 196 provides a framework for planning permission to be granted notwithstanding that a particular proposal may cause harm to an asset, provided that there are compensatory public benefits.

Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

Paragraph 192 sets out the issues a local planning authority should take into account in determining applications;

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

The Planning Practice Guidance also seeks to provide a clearer understanding of what constitutes 'public benefit'; as it is the public benefit that flows from a development that can justify harm, always ensuring also that considerable weight and importance is given to the desirability to preserve the setting of listed buildings in weighing the public benefits against the harm. It states (paragraph 20):

Public benefits may follow from many developments and could be anything that delivers economic, social or environmental progress as described in the National Planning Policy Framework (Paragraph 8). Public benefits should flow from the proposed development. They should be of a nature or scale to be of benefit to the public at large and should not just be a private benefit. However, benefits do not always have to be visible or accessible to the public in order to be genuine public benefits.

From this summary of the national heritage management policy framework it is clear that there is a complex assessment decision-making process to navigate when considering change within the historic environment.

Central to any decision is the recognition that history is not a static thing and that the significance of our historic environment derives from a history of change. To understand the significance of a place, the dynamics that help to create what we have inherited from previous generations and the challenges that we face to sustain and manage the places we value (and for future generations to enjoy) is a

significant responsibility, irrespective of whether the potential harm to its significance amounts to 'less than substantial harm' or 'substantial harm or total loss' of significance.

### HISTORIC ENGLAND ADVICE

Historic England in its 'Setting of Heritage Assets' – December 2017, explains that early assessment of setting may provide a basis for agreeing the scope and form of development, reducing the potential for disagreement and challenge later in the process.

The Historic England advice continues pointing out that opportunities for changes in the setting to enhance or better reveal the significance of a heritage asset should be explored.

On a similar theme the advice points out that good design may reduce or remove any identified harm, or provide enhancement, and design quality may be the main consideration in determining the balance of harm and benefit. Works of alteration or extension or demolition need not involve any harmful impact but may be necessary to ensure a building has a viable future.

Historic England in its Conservation Principles (2008) explains its approach to managing the historic environment and how we experience changing places stating in paragraph 88:

Very few significant places can be maintained at either public or private expense unless they are capable of some beneficial use; nor would it be desirable, even if it were practical, for most places that people value to become solely memorials of the past.

It also comments in paragraph 86:

Keeping a significant place in use is likely to require continual adaptation and change; but, provided such interventions respect the values of the place, they will tend to benefit public (heritage) as well as private interests in it. Many places now valued as part of the historic environment exist because of past patronage and private investment, and the work of successive generations often contributes to their significance. Owners and managers of significant places should not be discouraged from adding further layers of potential future interest and value, provided that recognised heritage values are not eroded or compromised in the process.

In relation to new works and alterations in paragraph 138 states:

New work or alteration to a significant place should normally be acceptable if:

- a) there is sufficient information comprehensively to understand the impacts of the proposal on the significance of the place;
- b) the proposal would not materially harm the values of the place, which, where appropriate, would be reinforced or further revealed;
- c) the proposals aspire to a quality of design and execution which may be valued now and in the future;

In relation to quality of design, paragraph 143 and 144 state:

There are no simple rules for achieving quality of design in new work, although a clear and coherent relationship of all the parts to the whole, as well as to the setting into which the new work is introduced, is essential. This neither implies nor precludes working in traditional or new ways but will normally involve respecting the values established through an assessment of the significance of the place.

Quality is enduring, even though taste and fashion may change. The eye appreciates the aesthetic qualities of a place such as its scale, composition, silhouette, and proportions, and tells us whether the intervention fits comfortably in its context. Achieving quality always depends on the skill of the designer. The choice of appropriate materials, and the craftsmanship applied to their use, is particularly crucial to both durability and to maintaining the specific character of places.

These conservation principles reflect the advice in NPPF (2019) on good design. Paragraph 124 states:

The creation of high-quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development,

While paragraph 127 advises that:

Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments... are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change.

The policies and advice described above provide an essential framework to guide designers and decision makers. In this respect it is worth noting recent case law and the advice it offers on the application of policy and legislation as set out below

The policies and advice described above provide an essential framework to guide designers and decision makers. In this respect it is worth noting recent case law and the advice it offers on the application of policy and legislation as set out below.

#### **S66 PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS) ACT 1990**

Section 66 of the Act requires local planning authorities to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

In the Court of Appeal, *Barnwell Manor Wind Energy Ltd v East Northants District Council, English Heritage and National Trust*, [2015] 1 W.L.R. 45, Sullivan L J made clear that to discharge this responsibility means that decision makers must give considerable importance and weight to the desirability of preserving the setting of listed buildings when carrying out the balancing exercise (of judging harm against other planning considerations).



In *Jones v Mordue & Anor* [2016] 1 W.L.R. 2682 the Court of Appeal explains how decision makers can ensure this duty can be fulfilled: that by working through paragraphs 131 -134 of the NPPF, in accordance with their terms a decision maker will have complied with the duty under sections 16, 66(1) and 72. This report follows this advice to ensure consistency with the duty to preserve or enhance.

In the Court of Appeal [*Catesby Estates v Steer and SSCLG*, 2018] the concept of setting was explored. In paragraph 15 of the judgement Justice Lindblom rehearses the Planning Inspector's considerations - commenting that the Inspector found it difficult to disassociate landscape impact from heritage impact. The focus of the judgement is to determine the extent to which visual and historical relationships between places contribute to define the extent of setting. Three general conclusions are made:

- a) The decision maker needs to understand the setting of a designated heritage asset, even if it cannot be delineated exactly;
- b) There is no one prescriptive way to define an asset's setting - a balanced judgement needs to be made concentrating on the surroundings in which an asset is experienced and keeping in mind that those surroundings may change over time;
- c) The effect of a development on the setting of a heritage asset and whether that effect harms significance.

#### **HISTORIC ENGLAND ADVICE NOTE 9, THE ADAPTIVE REUSE OF TRADITIONAL FARM BUILDINGS, OCTOBER 2017**

This Advice Note is directly relevant to considering future proposals for the former farm buildings adjoining Mead House (formerly Taynton Farm). The Advice Note is intended for all parties involved in planning and implementing the repair, restoration or adaptation of historic farm buildings.

The Introduction makes the point that:

Traditional farmsteads are an irreplaceable source of character in the English countryside. However, without appropriate uses to fund their long-term maintenance and repair, they will disappear from the landscape. While poor adaptation poses a threat, new commercial, residential or other uses that enhance their historic character and significance are to be encouraged.

The Advice Note is based on the principles set out in the NPPF, and;

- Requires an understanding of the historic character and significance of traditional farmsteads and their buildings within their local rural setting
- Considers their potential for and sensitivity to change, including opportunities for adaptation to new uses that will ensure their long-term survival
- Explains how this understanding should inform designs, both traditional and contemporary that reveal, enhance and retain their inherited significance

- Is relevant to all situations, from buildings that will allow only the lightest form of adaptive reuse to entirely new structures that respect the historic layout and character of a site.

This Report includes a statement of significance for the former farm buildings, and discusses its setting, in accordance with Historic England's Conservation Principles, and this Advice Note.

Section 4: Adapting Farm Buildings, sets out the issues to be addressed at the design stage. These include:

- Understanding the construction and condition
- Respecting the architectural and historic interest of the building
- Understanding the setting
- Achieve high standards of design, repair and craftsmanship
- Minimising alterations and loss to significant historic fabric
- Retaining distinctive features
- How to introduce daylight
- Considering levels of subdivision
- How to incorporate services and insulation
- The necessity for extensions or new buildings
- The reuse or retention of minor outbuildings
- The retention or enhancement of wildlife habitats

All these issues are addressed in depth in Historic England's publication **Adapting Traditional Farm Buildings Best Practice Guidelines for Adaptive Reuse, Sept 2017**.

The purpose of the Advice Note and Guideline is to:

Help secure sustainable development and the conservation of traditional farmsteads and their buildings through the planning and design process... the advice is based on a positive approach to informing sympathetic change and development in rural areas.

#### **WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL LOCAL PLAN**

The West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2013, formerly adopted on 27 September 2018, sets out the overall planning framework for the District from 2011-2031. It contains a number of policies relevant to the conservation of heritage assets.

In relation to Heritage Assets section 8.82 notes:

The heritage assets of West Oxfordshire are highly distinctive, possessing characteristics deriving from the history, geology and landform of the District, and together contributing to a strong and tangible sense of place. The assets take many forms: buildings and areas of built development, constructed of local limestone or ironstone and following local vernacular traditions.

And at section 8.87

Conserving and enhancing the historic environment is a critically important part of sustainable development and a key element of this Local Plan. Heritage assets whether designated or non-designated are irreplaceable features of the historic environment, whose effective conservation and enhancement delivers a wide range of social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits. At the national level there is a presumption that heritage assets will be conserved and enhanced in a manner that is appropriate to their significance and also enjoyed for the quality of life they bring to current and future generations.

The Local Plan includes a number of policies directly applicable to considering the conservation of the listed farm buildings adjoining Mead House (formerly Taynton Farm), EH9, EH10, EH11 and EH12. These are attached at Appendix 3.

**Policy EH9** in relation to the Historic Environment states, inter alia, that;

All development proposals should conserve and/or enhance the special character, appearance and distinctiveness of West Oxfordshire's historic environment, including the significance of the District's heritage assets, in a manner appropriate to their historic character and significance and in a viable use that is consistent with their conservation, in accordance with national legislation, policy and guidance for the historic environment.

In determining applications, great weight and importance will be given to conserving and/or enhancing the significance of designated heritage assets, including:

- the special architectural and historic interest of Listed Buildings, with regard to their character, fabric and their settings;
- the special architectural and historic interest, character and/or appearance of the District's Conservation Areas and their settings, including the contribution their surroundings make to their physical, visual and historic significance.

**Policy EH10** in relation to Conservation Areas, states:

Proposals for development in a Conservation Area or affecting the setting of a Conservation Area will be permitted where it can be shown to conserve or enhance the special interest, character, appearance and setting, specifically provided that:

- the location, form, scale, massing, density, height, layout, landscaping, use, alignment and external appearance of the development conserves or enhances the special historic or architectural interest, character and appearance of the Conservation Area;
- the development conserves or enhances the setting of the Conservation Area and is not detrimental to views within, into or out of the Area;
- the proposals are sympathetic to the original curtilage and pattern of development and to important green spaces, such

as paddocks, greens and gardens, and other gaps or spaces between buildings and the historic street pattern which make a positive contribution to the character in the Conservation Area;

- the wider social and environmental effects generated by the development are compatible with the existing character and appearance of the Conservation Area; and
- there would be no loss of, or harm to, any feature that makes a positive contribution to the special interest, character or appearance of the Conservation Area, unless the development would make an equal or greater contribution.

And:

Wherever possible the sympathetic restoration and re-use of buildings that make a positive contribution to the special interest, character and appearance of a Conservation Area will be encouraged, thereby preventing harm through the cumulative loss of features which are an asset to the Conservation Area.

**Policy EH11** in relation to Listed Buildings, states:

Proposals for additions or alterations to, or change of use of, a Listed Building (including partial demolition) or for development within the curtilage of, or affecting the setting of, a Listed Building, will be permitted where it can be shown to:

- conserve or enhance the special architectural or historic interest of the building's fabric, detailed features, appearance or character and setting;
- respect the building's historic curtilage or context or its value within a group and/or its setting, including its historic landscape or townscape context; and
- retain the special interest that justifies its designation through appropriate design that is sympathetic both to the Listed Building and its setting and that of any adjacent heritage assets in terms of siting, size, scale, height, alignment, materials and finishes (including colour and texture), design and form

**Policy EH12** in relation to Traditional Buildings states:

In determining applications that involve the conversion, extension or alteration of traditional buildings, proposals will not normally be permitted where this would:

- extensively alter the existing structure or remove features of interest;
- include extensions or alterations which would obscure or compromise the form or character of the original building.

### WEST OXFORD DESIGN GUIDE

In 2016 West Oxfordshire District Council published an updated version of its Design Guide. In addition to providing guidelines on statutory and non-statutory heritage assets (Chapter 7) and Conservation Areas (Chapter 6), Chapter 15 deals specifically with the Conversion of Agricultural Buildings.





Section 15.1 state:

Traditional agricultural buildings are a conspicuous and precious feature of the settlements and landscapes of West Oxfordshire. The best possible use for these buildings is the one for which they were originally designed.

However, in the event that they become redundant as agricultural buildings, appropriate new uses may sometimes be found to secure their conservation and continued utility.

Where planning permission is required for the change of use or for alterations, the Council's primary objective will be to secure the preservation of the agricultural building and its meaningful contribution to the character of the surrounding area.

It provides development principles and guidelines for the conversion of former agricultural buildings. <https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/residents/planning-building/historic-buildings-conservation-areas/design-advice>.

#### SUMMARY

It is clear that planning policies at the National and Local level acknowledge that most listed and unlisted former farm buildings are, or face redundancy, and that to ensure these valuable parts of the historical and architectural character of settlements and the rural landscape careful adaptation and conversion offers an opportunity to prevent their loss and provide a long-term viable sustainable future. The planning policies are supported by guidelines for the sympathetic adaptation of the full range of agricultural building types, and recognises that adding new elements may support achieving a viable conservation outcome.



Southern shelter sheds

## OPPORTUNITIES

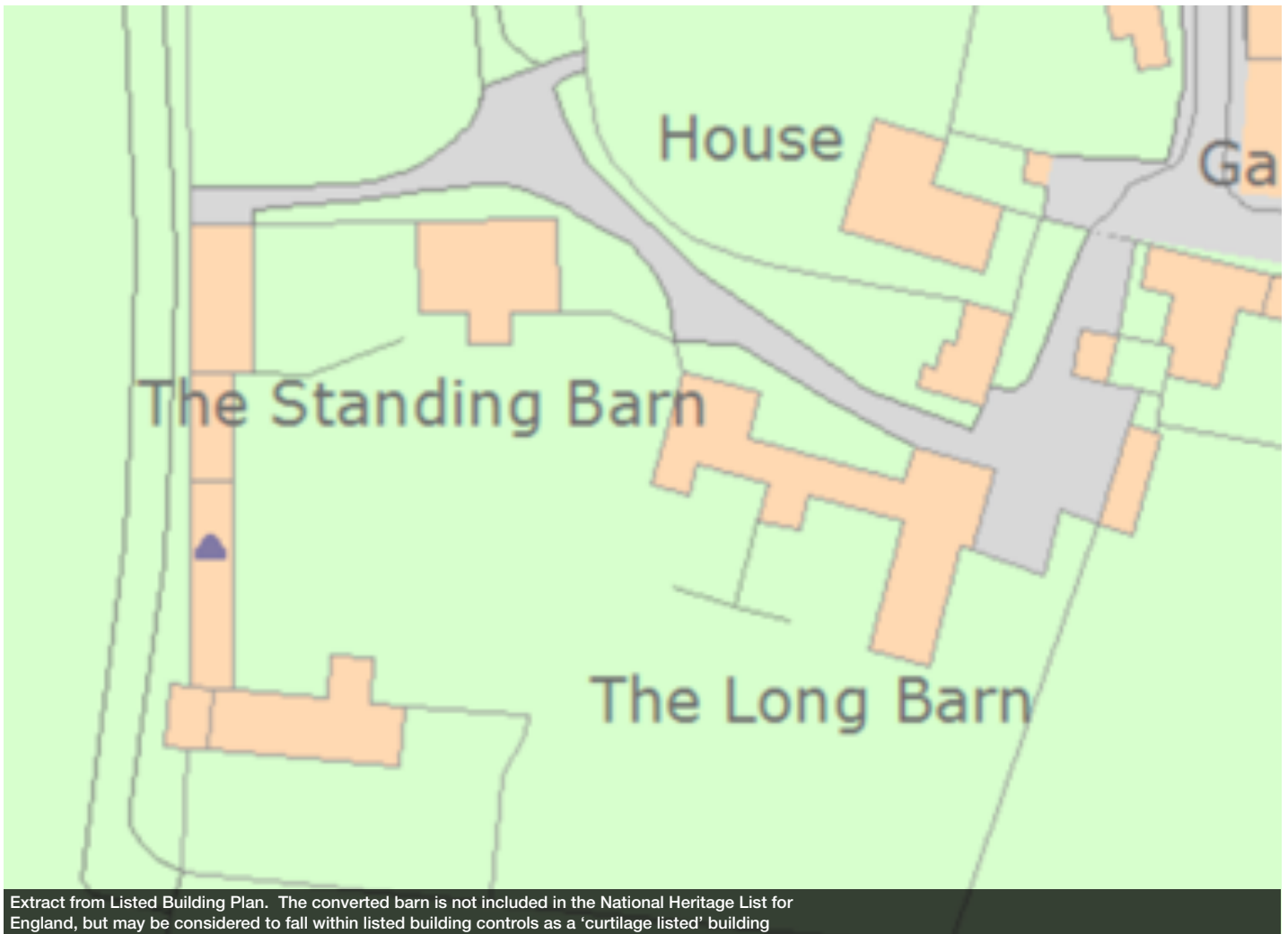
This report demonstrates that the grade II listed former farm buildings, and the unlisted Standing Barn, which make up the historic farmstead to the former Taynton Farm are of heritage significance and contribute to the historic and aesthetic character of the Taynton Conservation Area.

These farm buildings became redundant following the sale of the adjacent farm house, now Mead House, in 1967. While the Standing Barn was converted to a residential use in the 1980s, the remaining buildings in the farmstead have remained vacant, or used for low intensity ancillary domestic storage.

National and Local Planning Policies and guidelines strongly encourage the adaptive re-use of redundant former farm buildings. Accordingly, it is considered that a proposal for the repair and adaptive reuse of these redundant listed farm buildings, which incorporates a new design element, offers the following opportunities and benefits:

- It will ensure a viable use which will provide the financial resources required to undertake the urgent and expensive repairs to the buildings, and thus ensure their retention and long-term conservation
- The linking and incorporation of all the buildings in the one overall scheme will reinforce and maintain the historic and functional integrity of the farmstead layout
- The proposal for single dwelling, with guest accommodation will ensure the farmyard will not be subdivided but maintained as a whole and thus provide the appropriate historic and aesthetic setting to the buildings.
- The adaptive reuse of the unlisted barn, while ensuring its retention, reflects the 1980s approach to the conversion of barns, resulting in an over domestication of the building at the expense of its vernacular character. The proposal offers opportunities to reverse the less sympathetic aspects of the conversion.
- The retention and restoration of the former farmstead would preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and its setting, of which this forms an important part, being the southern edge to the open countryside.





## APPENDIX 1: ENTRY IN THE NATIONAL HERITAGE LIST FOR ENGLAND

Heritage Category: Listed Building

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1053418

Date first listed: 12-Sep-1955

Date of most recent amendment: 21-Aug-1989

Statutory Address: MEAD HOUSE, GRANARY AND CART SHED AND ATTACHED FARM BUILDINGS APPROXIMATELY 60 METRES WEST

### LOCATION

Statutory Address: MEAD HOUSE, GRANARY AND CART SHED AND ATTACHED FARM BUILDINGS APPROXIMATELY 60 METRES WEST

County: Oxfordshire

District: West Oxfordshire (District Authority)

Parish: Taynton

National Grid Reference: SP 23085 13613

### DETAILS

TAYNTON SP2313 10/173 Mead House, Granary and 12/09/55 cart shed, and attached farm buildings approx. 60m W (Formerly listed as Group of Barns to west) GV II Cartshed and granary. Probably early C19. Stone coursed rubble; stone slate roof. Single storey and attic; 5-bay range. Bay divisions marked by round stone columns. Trenched purlin roof visible to left end. Granary to right end of roof. Interior not inspected but noted as retaining grain bins. Attached L-shaped range of shelter sheds and outbuildings. Stone coursed rubble; stone slate roofs. Single-storey, approximately 15-bay range. C19 king-post roofs to parts.

## APPENDIX 2: WEST OXFORDSHORE LOCAL PLAN POLICIES

### POLICY EH9:

#### HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

All development proposals should conserve and/or enhance the special character, appearance and distinctiveness of West Oxfordshire's historic environment, including the significance of the District's heritage assets, in a manner appropriate to their historic character and significance and in a viable use that is consistent with their conservation, in accordance with national legislation, policy and guidance for the historic environment. In determining applications, great weight and importance will be given to conserving and/or enhancing the significance of designated heritage assets, including:

- the outstanding universal values for which Blenheim Palace and Park is inscribed as a World Heritage Site (WHS), as guided by its WHS Management Plan (see also Policy EW9);
- the special architectural and historic interest of Listed Buildings, with regard to their character, fabric and their settings;
- the special architectural and historic interest, character and/or appearance of the District's Conservation Areas and their settings, including the contribution their surroundings make to their physical, visual and historic significance;
- the special archaeological and historic interest of nationally important monuments (whether Scheduled or not), both with regard to their fabric and their settings;
- the special cultural, architectural and historic interest of Registered Parks and Gardens, including the contribution their surroundings make to their physical, visual and historical significance. Significant weight will also be given to the local and regional value of non-designated heritage assets, including non-listed vernacular buildings (such as traditional agricultural buildings, chapels and mills), together with archaeological monuments that make a significant contribution to the District's historic environment.

All applications which affect, or have the potential to affect, heritage assets will be expected to:

- a) use appropriate expertise to describe the significance of the assets, their setting and historic landscape context of the application site, at a level of detail proportionate to the historic significance of the asset or area, using recognised methodologies and, if necessary, original survey. This shall be sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on the asset's historic, architectural and archaeological features, significance and character;
- b) demonstrate that the proposal would, in order of preference:
  - avoid adverse impacts on the significance of the asset(s) (including those arising from changes to their settings) and, wherever possible, enhance or better reveal the significance of the asset(s);
  - minimise any unavoidable and justified (by the public benefits that would accrue from the proposed development – see below) adverse impacts and mitigate those impacts in a manner proportionate to the significance of the asset(s) and the nature and level of the impact, investigate and record changes to or loss of physical fabric, features, objects or other remains and make the results publicly available.
- c) demonstrate that any new development that would result in the unavoidable and justified loss of all or part of a heritage asset would proceed within a reasonable and agreed timetable that makes allowance for all necessary safeguarding and recording of fabric and other remains, including contingencies for unexpected discoveries.

#### DESIGNATED ASSETS

Proposals which would harm the significance of a designated asset will not be approved, unless there is a clear and convincing justification in the form of substantive tangible public benefits that clearly and convincingly outweigh the harm, using the balancing principles set out in national policy and guidance.

#### NON-DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS

When considering proposals that affect, directly or indirectly, the significance of non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be made having regard to:

- the scale of any harm or loss;
- the significance of the heritage asset; and
- the public benefits of the development. If it is determined through the relevant evidence that currently non-designated buildings, structures, historic landscapes or archaeology are of national significance, those elements of this policy for designated heritage assets will apply.

#### RECORD AND ADVANCE UNDERSTANDING

Where development that would result in substantial harm to or loss of the significance of a heritage asset is permitted, developers will be required to record and advance understanding of the significance of that asset, in a manner appropriate to the nature of the asset, its importance and the impact, and publish that evidence and make it publicly accessible.\*

\*(For the avoidance of doubt, the ability to mitigate loss of significance through investigation and recording will not contribute to the balancing judgement of whether such a loss is justifiable under this policy.



**POLICY EH10:****CONSERVATION AREAS**

Proposals for development in a Conservation Area or affecting the setting of a Conservation Area will be permitted where it can be shown to conserve or enhance the special interest, character, appearance and setting, specifically provided that:

- the location, form, scale, massing, density, height, layout, landscaping, use, alignment and external appearance of the development conserves or enhances the special historic or architectural interest, character and appearance of the Conservation Area;
- the development conserves or enhances the setting of the Conservation Area and is not detrimental to views within, into or out of the Area;
- the proposals are sympathetic to the original curtilage and pattern of development and to important green spaces, such as paddocks, greens and gardens, and other gaps or spaces between buildings and the historic street pattern which make a positive contribution to the character in the Conservation Area;
- the wider social and environmental effects generated by the development are compatible with the existing character and appearance of the Conservation Area; and
- there would be no loss of, or harm to, any feature that makes a positive contribution to the special interest, character or appearance of the Conservation Area, unless the development would make an equal or greater contribution. Applications for the demolition of a building in a Conservation Area will only be permitted where it has been demonstrated that:
- the building detracts from or does not make a positive contribution to the special interest, character or appearance of the Conservation Area; or
- the building is of no historic or architectural interest or is wholly beyond repair and is not capable of beneficial use; and
- any proposed replacement building makes an equal or greater contribution to the special interest, character or appearance of the Conservation Area.

Wherever possible the sympathetic restoration and re-use of buildings that make a positive contribution to the special interest, character and appearance of a Conservation Area will be encouraged, thereby preventing harm through the cumulative loss of features which are an asset to the Conservation Area.

**POLICY EH11:****LISTED BUILDINGS**

Proposals for additions or alterations to, or change of use of, a Listed Building (including partial demolition) or for development within the curtilage of, or affecting the setting of, a Listed Building, will be permitted where it can be shown to:

- conserve or enhance the special architectural or historic interest of the building's fabric, detailed features, appearance or character and setting;
- respect the building's historic curtilage or context or its value within a group and/or its setting, including its historic landscape or townscape context; and
- retain the special interest that justifies its designation through appropriate design that is sympathetic both to the Listed Building and its setting and that of any adjacent heritage assets in terms of siting, size, scale, height, alignment, materials and finishes (including colour and texture), design and form.

**POLICY EH12:****TRADITIONAL BUILDINGS**

In determining applications that involve the conversion, extension or alteration of traditional buildings, proposals will not normally be permitted where this would:

- extensively alter the existing structure or remove features of interest;
- include extensions or alterations which would obscure or compromise