

HERITAGE STATEMENT

SINGLE STOREY OAK FRAMED ORANGERY EXTENSION
TO REAR AT BARN CASTLE, WRAGG CASTLE LANE,
PITCHCOMBE, STROUD, GLOUCESTERSHIRE



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Introduction

This Heritage Statement has been prepared by Prime Oak Ltd, at the request of the Local Planning Authority, to accompany a householder planning application for a proposed oak framed orangery extension to the rear of Barn Castle. Barn Castle is a former agricultural barn which is now converted to a dwelling, situated to the north of the centre of the village of Pitchcombe. Pitchcombe is a small rural village located approximately 6 miles to the south of Gloucester.

Barn Castle is not a statutorily listed building and does not lie within a Conservation Area. However Haylesmead and Wragg Castle Farmhouse, further along Wragg Castle Lane to the east, are listed buildings and therefore the Local Planning Authority has requested the submission of this Heritage Statement.

This statement should be read in conjunction with the drawings enclosed with the accompanying application, including:

- Location Plan (drg. 52018/01);
- Proposed Block Plan (drg. 52018/02);
- Existing Ground Floor Plan & Elevations (drg. 52018/03);
- Existing Roof Plan (drg. 52018/04);
- Proposed Ground Floor Plan & Elevations (drg. 52018/05);
- Proposed Roof Plan (drg. 52018/06).

Prime Oak Ltd will be designing and constructing the proposed extension on behalf of the applicant. Prime Oak are one of the country's leading specialists in the design and construction of oak framed buildings for all kinds of domestic and other uses, utilising traditional mortise and tenon pegged joint carpentry techniques.

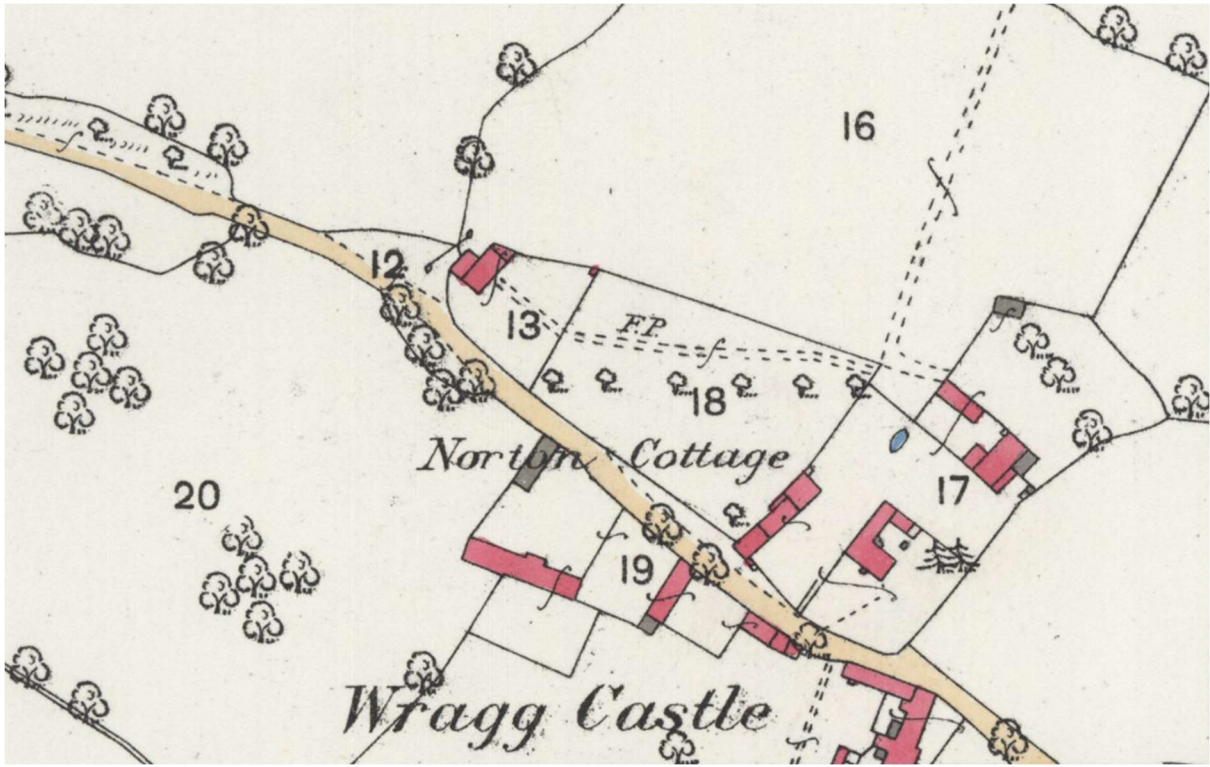
The Proposal

The proposal is to construct a single storey orangery-style extension to the rear of the main house. It would be an oak framed structure with its walls predominantly glazed, but incorporating stone base walls. The roof of the extension would be partly flat but would also include a pitched glazed roof lantern.

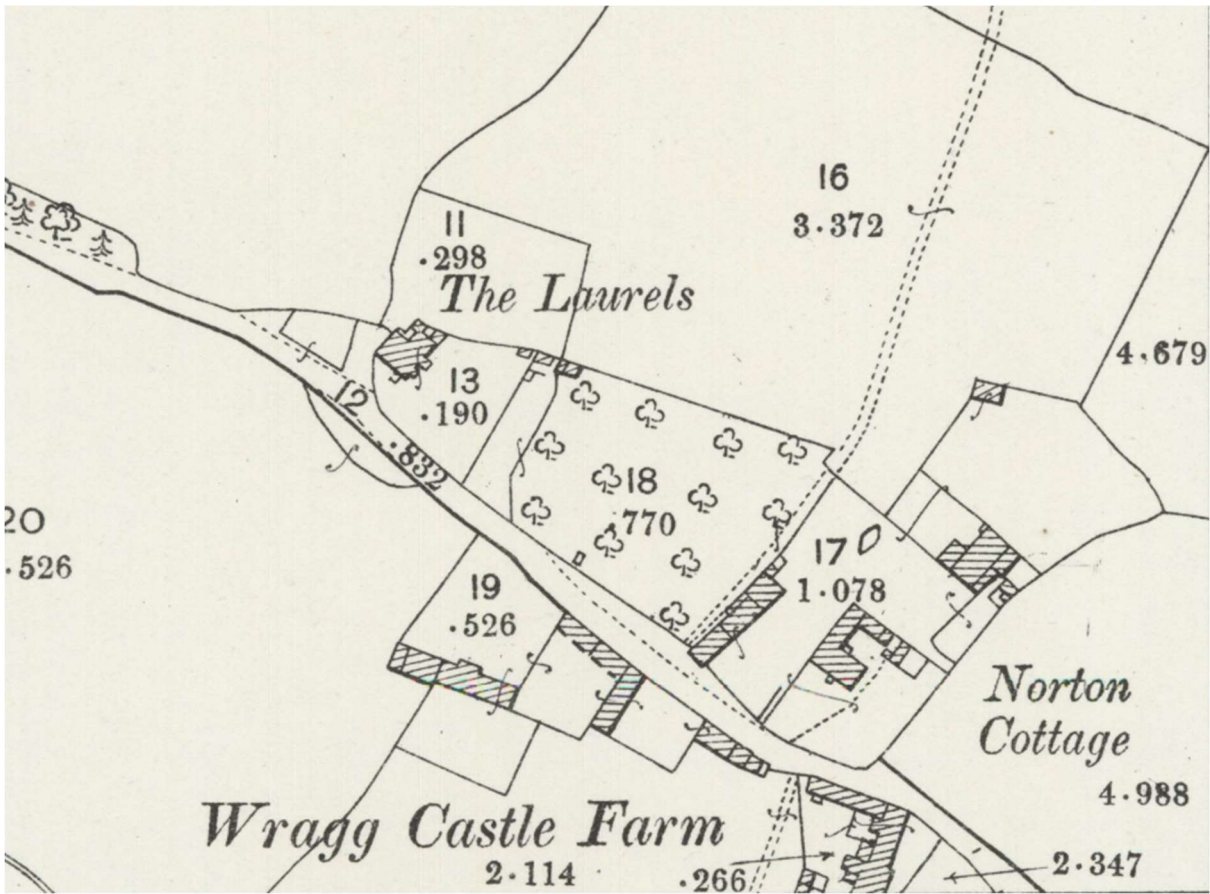
Heritage Statement

Barn Castle is a detached dwelling formed from the conversion of a former agricultural barn. Planning consent to carry out the conversion works was first granted in 1989 and subsequently renewed in 1994. The building has a long linear floor plan and is part two storey and part single storey. A separate detached single storey L shaped annexe outbuilding lies to the north of the main house. The building is constructed with coursed rubble stone walls and a dual pitched gabled roof finished in stone slates.

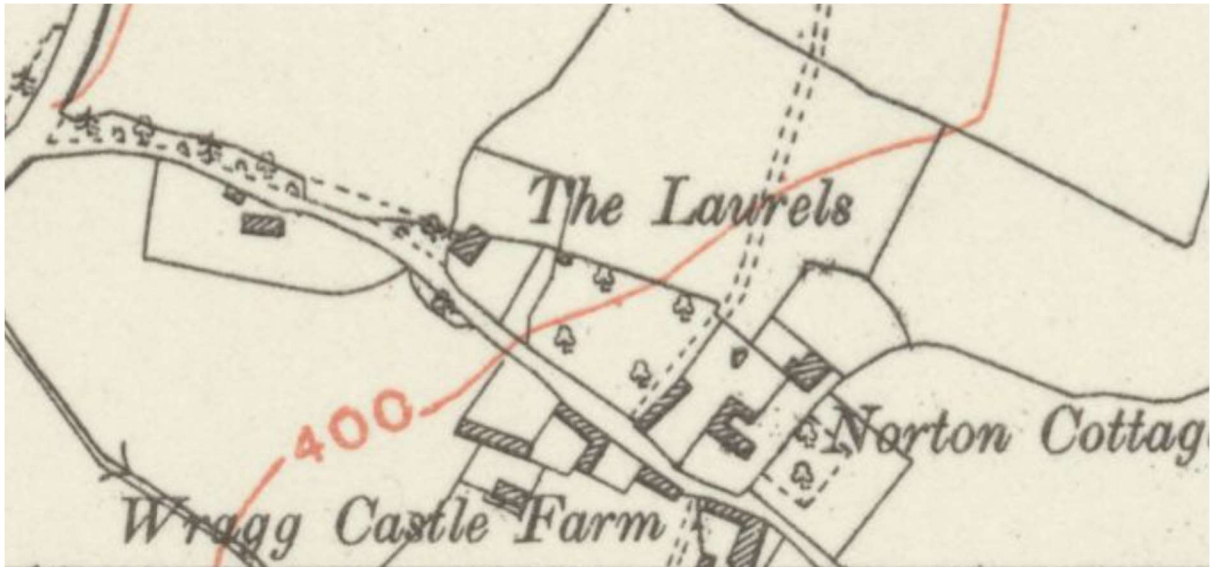
Barn Castle was historically an agricultural barn, most likely associated with Wragg Castle Farmhouse just to the east. Whilst Wragg Castle Farmhouse dates from the C17, it retains an associated former stables block dating from the C19, and Barn Castle also appears to date from that C19 period. It clearly appears on historic mapping from the C19 (see below), as do the two earlier buildings which are now listed: Wragg Castle Farmhouse and Haylesmead. What is now Barn Castle appears to be one of the outbuildings indicated on historic mapping as part of the farm complex of Wragg Castle Farm.



Extract from 1885 edition OS map.



Extract from 1903 edition OS map.



Extract from 1924 edition OS map.



Extract from 1954 edition OS map.

What historic mapping also shows is how little Pitchcombe has changed over time, with its layout of roads and buildings today appearing largely as it did in the C18/C19. There has been relatively little new development or infill over that time, with Barn View and Haylesmead bungalow only appearing in the late C20.

According to online information published by the Parish Council, records of a settlement at Pitchcombe date back to the C12 (through letters and land transactions). The Parish Council also tell of a legend associated with Wragg Castle Farm in that it incorporates a staircase that was once part of an ancient castle. It was probably one of many strongholds raised during the reign of King Stephen

(1135-1154), of which 140 were ordered to be destroyed by a Council of Westminster under King Henry II in 1155. As the castle crumbled, local folklore has it that it became known as the 'Wragged Castle', lending its name to the subsequent farm and lane passing by it. This storey does however remain a legend.

Wragg Castle Farmhouse itself, off to the east of Barn Castle, is today a listed building, first listed Grade II on the 28th June 1960. The statutory listing description reads as follows:

Farmhouse with attached stable. Early C17; extended to north mid-late C17; early C19 stable. Random rubble and ashlar limestone, coursed rubble to stable; ashlar chimneys; stone slate roof. Two-storey with attic. East front: earliest part to left has full gable with single-window fenestration, 3-light to ground and upper floors, 2-light attic, all recessed cavetto with hoodmoulds. Small stair-light at upper floor level, stair turret projecting forward with catslide roof. Range continues to right, moulded doorway with plank door being grouped with two 2-light casements to right under combined hoodmould; two grouped 3-light casements above. Full parapet gable to later C17 addition to right, 2-light to ground floor, 3-light above and 2-light to attic, all recessed chamfered with hoodmoulds and leaded iron casements, attic casement with lead latticing. Upper floor single light to left. Ridge-mounted chimney indicates original north gable end, ridge height changing slightly at this point. Parapet north gable end, chimney having moulded cap. West side: projecting chimney stack with moulded cap to gable of south cross-wing. Outbuilding with lean-to roof below. Addition to north has gabled stair turret with 2-light recessed chamfered lead latticed casements. Two further 2-light casements to right. Stable range projects forward to left with segmental arched openings, loft doorway in west gable end. Interior not inspected.

Wragg Castle Farmhouse derives its heritage significance from its age and place within the historical settlement of Pitchcombe. It has a high degree of significance as a surviving example of an early C17 farmhouse, evidencing rural domestic/agrarian architecture, construction techniques, materials and building layout from that period. The presence of the building and its association with the former farmstead and outbuildings also contributes to the understanding of the agricultural and socio-economic development of the settlement of Pitchcombe and its place within the wider geography and topography of the rural area to the south of Gloucester.

Haylesmead opposite to Wragg Castle Farmhouse is also a listed building. This property is also situated to the east of Barn Castle but on the opposite northern side of Wragg Castle Lane. It is notable for the age of the original building, dating from the early C17, but also for having an early C20 extension designed by the highly renowned architect Edwin Lutyens. Haylesmead was first listed Grade II on the 24th March 1987 and is referred to as 'Halesmead' in the statutory list entry. The listing description read as follows:

Shown on map as Haylesmead. Detached house. Early-mid C17; extensive early C19 alterations. Early C20 addition by Edwin Lutyens for Miss Mayer. Random and coursed rubble limestone; ashlar chimneys; stone slate roof. Two-storey with attic; 2-storey rear wing. Front: 3-window fenestration to main part of house, all 16-pane sashes in chamfered surrounds. Central doorway with Regency architraves and moulded 5-panel door; gabled decorative timber porch. Two eaves-mounted gable dormers with small-paned timber casements. Gable end chimneys, now reduced in height with plain caps. Part to right is single-storey Lutyens addition with continuous set of small-paned timber casements. Chimney with moulded cap to south east gable end; off-centre small paned glazed doors. Rear: 2-storey wing has C20 casements. Lower parallel-roofed range added to rear of front range. Interior: large fireplace in one room with monolithic jamb slabs. Spiral staircase now removed but alcove survives.

High ceiling with plaster mouldings to Lutyens room, stone fireplace having decorative edge to mantel shelf.

Barn Castle is located some 65-70m away from both Wragg Castle Farmhouse and Haylesmead, with other buildings in between blocking direct views between the respective buildings. Therefore Barn Castle is not visible within the immediate setting of either listed building. In more general terms Barn Castle contributes to the character of Pitchcombe through being built from the predominant building materials within the village (stone and slate) and being a former agricultural barn. It therefore reflects the local vernacular and gives clues as to the former grouping of buildings within the historic farmstead. That historic grouping has, however, been somewhat eroded by the construction of more modern houses, particularly the neighbouring Barn View to the west which has introduced modern construction into the area surrounding the former farm buildings.

The proposed extension to Barn Castle would be constructed off the rear elevation to the property, so would be screened in views along Wragg Castle Lane by Barn Castle itself as well as the existing annexe building to the north of the main house. The extension would not be visible within the setting of Wragg Castle Farmhouse or Haylesmead and would not be visible travelling along Wragg Castle Lane through the village. The setting of the two listed buildings would not be harmed, the character of Pitchcombe would not be materially affected and the contribution Barn Castle presently makes to that setting and character would not materially change as a result of the proposed development.

With regard to impact on Barn Castle itself, the proposed extension would be a minor addition, only a fraction of the much greater width of the existing building and single storey against the existing much greater two storey height. The proposal would therefore be a wholly subservient addition not visible from outside the site. The proposed oak frame would reflect the materials and colour of the existing windows and doors to Barn Cottage which were added as part of the conversion works. At the same time the predominantly glazed construction of the proposal would ensure that it would be visually lightweight but also visually distinct from the existing barn, allowing the form and materials of the original barn to remain clear and legible. The proposal would appear as an obviously modern extension, allowing the historic form and setting of the existing building within this small settlement to remain legible.

For the above reasons it is considered that the proposed extension would cause no material harm to the setting of the listed Wragg Castle Farmhouse or Haylesmead, or to the contribution Barn Cottage makes to that setting as described in this statement above. No existing heritage assets would be harmed as a result of the proposal.