

**HISTORICAL APPRAISAL
AND HERITAGE IMPACT STATEMENT**



MUSGROVE FARM YARD BUILDINGS

DUNKESWELL

HONITON

DEVON

EX14 4RR

FOR:

Messrs HUGHES AND BOTT

MUSGROVE FARM

DUNKESWELL

HONITON DEVON EX14 4RR

PREPARED BY:

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report is prepared by Dr Henry K Farmer, PHd, MSc, MRICS, MCIOB, ABeng.
Old Barn Court, Wrangway, Wellington, Somerset, TA231 9QG
- 1.2 I have extensive experience in maintenance, alteration and conversion to alternative use of buildings ranging from National Monument status, Grade II and Grade II* Listed Buildings through to domestic structures and unscheduled traditional and ethnic architecture.
- 1.3 I am a Chartered Surveyor (MRICS) and Chartered Project Manager (MCIOB) with MSc degree (Bath University School of Architecture) and PhD (Loughborough University). I specialise in maintenance and alterations to historic buildings with experience ranging from large nationally important structures (Dover Castle) through to Domestic buildings (Grade II and grade II*). I have worked closely with Historic England on various projects and act as Expert Witness on historical and Heritage planning disputes. I am 79 years old and semi-retired since November 2020.
- 1.4 This report is specific to Musgrove Farmyard buildings only and no information contained herein should be taken as applicable to any other building or structure unless specifically stated herein.
- 1.5 This Heritage Impact Statement is prepared in support of a Planning Application to carry out works of preservation, alteration and conversion to alternative use of old original stone agricultural buildings forming the original farm yard of Musgrove Farm, a listed building.

2.0 PROPOSAL RATIONAL

- 2.1 The planning application forming part of this submission proposes major repair and conservation works to preserve the original stone farm buildings forming three sides of the original farm yard and to convert the majority of the buildings into holiday letting accommodation to be managed by the owner of Musgrove Farm House, forming the fourth side of the yard.

3.0 HISTORICAL INFORMATION

3.1 The Farmhouse is Listed (1988) and the Information is reproduced below. There is no mention of the buildings; however it may be considered that they are listed by association with the Farm house.

3.2 *Farmhouse. Late C17-early C18. Mid-late C19 modernisation and extension.*

Plastered local stone rubble with some cob; stone rubble stacks topped with C20 brick; bitumen sheet roof over the original thatch.

Plan: 4-room plan farmhouse facing south-east. At the right (north-east) end there is a small unheated room, probably the dairy or buttery originally. Next is the kitchen with a rear lateral stack. Left of centre is a parlour/dining room with a front doorway and an axial stack backing onto a parlour at the left end which has a gable end stack. The left end parlour is probably a C19 extension. The rest of the house appears to be a single phase late C17-early C18 extension. 2 Storeys. Exterior : irregular 3-window front of circa 1981 replacement casements with glazing bars. The main front doorway is roughly central and it contains a C19 1-panel door behind a contemporary gabled and slate roofed porch. At the right end there is a secondary doorway with side lights in to the former dairy/buttery. The roof is halfhipped to the right and gable-ended to the left. It steps up from the main house to the left end extension.

Interior; is largely the result of the mid-late c19 modernisation. In the left end section no carpentry or early features are showing and , as far as can be seen, this is wholly C19 in date. Although there is C19 joinery detail throughout the rest the basic structure is late C17- early C18 and the C19 modernisation appears to have been superficial here. The Kitchen and the dairy/buttery have roughly finished crossbeams and the kitchen fireplace is blocked by a C20 grate ,its original oak-framed front is exposed. The roof space is inaccessible but the bases of some straight principals show on the first floor, their scantling large enough to suggest that they are from original A-frame roof trusses.

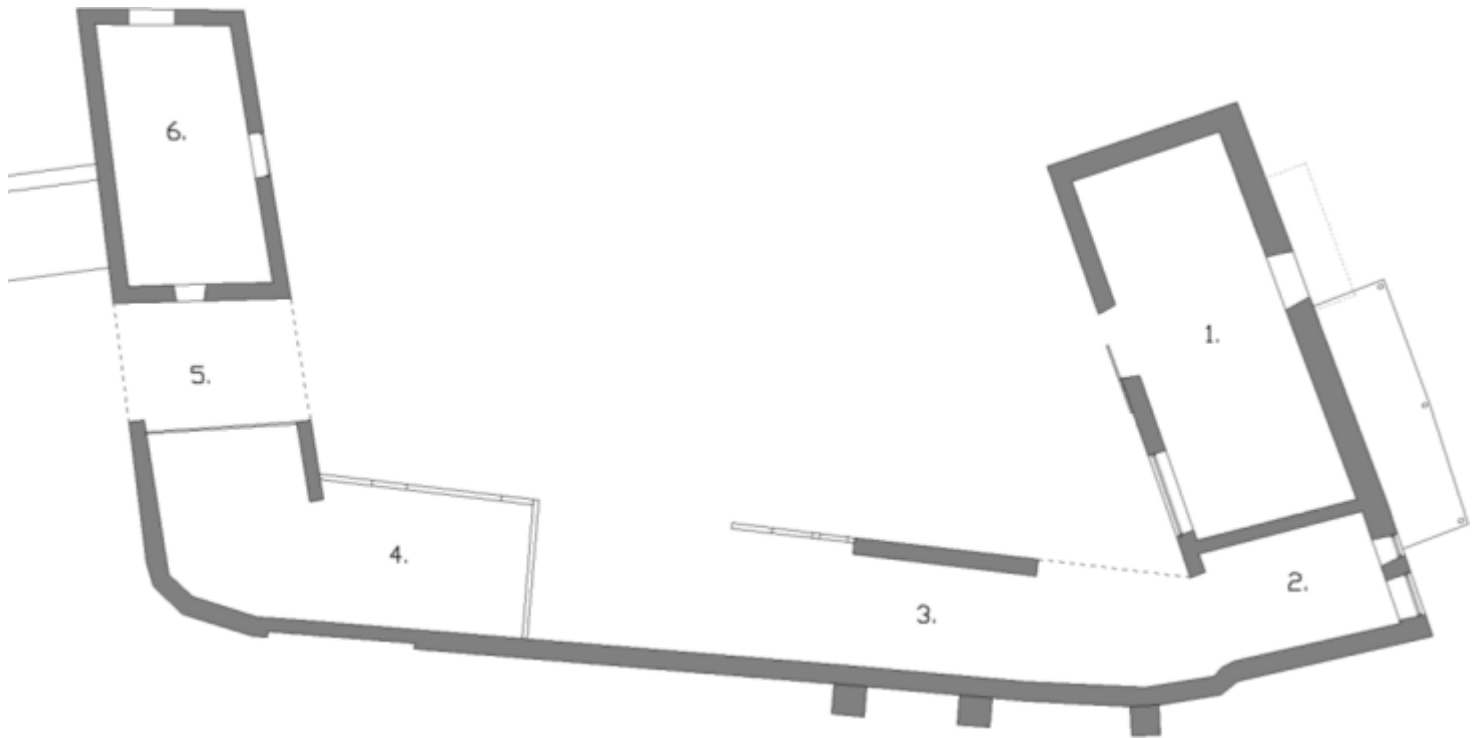
Listing NGR: ST1417811041

3.3 The information contained in the Listing is generally accurate but a new slate roof structure has replaced the Bitumen sheeting.

4.0 VISUAL INSPECTION

4.1 The general arrangement of rooms is shown on P1 below. The areas are numbered for identification only and the sequence of numbering starts at the right hand building one.

4.2 Labelled Existing Ground Floor plan:



4.3 Barn 1,

Originally a cross-passage threshing barn with double opposed doors forming the draught passage over the threshing floor. Roof is of light section imported timber trusses C1900 with purlins and galvanised steel roofing sheets. This building is reasonably intact and weather proof. A section of one end has been partitioned of to form a separate compartment which may have been used for rearing chickens or turkeys.



Figure 1 Threshing barn and part of cobbled yard

- 4.4 Area 2, partitioned off from the threshing barn and with a platform ceiling providing storage over accessed from the threshing barn. There are two openings in the rear wall and steel roof covering is corroded in parts.
- 4.5 Barn 3 and 4, these form the lower side of the courtyard and were probably stock housing originally. There is a short section of stone wall but the majority is open fronted and may have been a Linhay originally (largely open-fronted with posts supporting cross beams to store fodder above the cattle on the ground level:- evidence from mortise slot in one remaining post). A loose box has been formed from part of the open fronted area. The roof is much repaired and covered with steel sheeting which moves considerably in any breeze.



Figure 2 showing Linhay post with mortise hole.

- 4.6 Area 5, covered way between barns 4 and 5. The roof over links the two buildings and would have provided a covered space to unload wagons into the barns on both sides but is not sufficiently high for modern farm equipment, resulting in the abandonment (by previous owners) of these barns and the construction of new buildings either side of the approach drive. Roof covering is galvanised steel coated in tar. The brick Quoins possibly indicate a widening of the opening and other alterations.



Figure 3 entrance to yard showing partly collapsed roof and repair.

- 4.7 Barn 6, rectangular stone barn in need of urgent repair to prevent partial collapse of an area of stone wall at the rear. Rough concrete floor and galvanised steel roof on slender timber framework.



Figure 4 Barn 6, possibly stables for working horses?



Figure 5 Roof over Barn 6



Figure 6. Roof over barn 5 showing structure

4.8 General over all structural condition of buildings is very poor and some areas are in danger of collapse unless urgent repair work is carried out. All the roofs are in danger of wind damage and it is possible that their sheltered position has saved them from recent storms.

5.0 Heritage importance.

- 5.1 Individually the buildings are of little Heritage value or importance, but the grouping and orientation has heritage value as it defines the farm layout.
- 5.2 The Threshing Barn (1) would have been orientated so as to receive the maximum benefit from the prevailing wind direction for threshing and the whole arrangement of buildings positioned to provide shelter and enclosure for livestock.
- 5.3 The roofs would have been thatched and there is evidence that the roof was higher and provided storage above with cattle below. However, it is possible that the top of the walls was lowered when the steel roof replaced the thatch, as the tops of the walls frequently are damaged by water ingress as the thatch degenerates if not adequately repaired on a regular basis.
- 5.4 There is no significant Heritage value of any of the roof coverings or timber roof framing or steel covering. The roofs have sagged badly in places and the steel sheets have distorted and bent during the process.
- 5.5 There is considerable Heritage value in the general layout of the walls and floor plan that remain and these should be preserved.
- 5.6 The courtyard contained by the barns is likely to have been paved with 'cobblestones' of local flint and is partly concreted over at the upper end adjacent to the house. The un-concreted area should be investigated to see if the cobblestone paving remains under the current grass surface and should be preserved.

Recommendations.

- 5.1 The building must be made safe and additional fixings/restraints installed to prevent wind damage.
- 5.2 A preservation plan for the walls and footprint of these buildings should be prepared that will allow sufficient income to finance the cost of repairs and preservation works.
- 5.3 The costs of such works will be considerable and consideration should be given to phasing the works so that expenditure on some areas can continue after the start of income generation.

- 5.4 In achieving the principal objective of preserving the group floor plan and outline it is anticipated that some alteration to the roof and openings may be necessary to achieve viability.
- 5.5 These buildings are capable of conversion into 'Holiday letting units' which can generate income to facilitate the preservation works.
- 5.6 The existing footprint of the buildings should be preserved and all walls repaired and re-pointed in lime mortar and local flint stone.
- 5.7 Where new window openings are unavoidable to enable use of the buildings, quoins to openings to be in local natural matching stone with timber frames set back 200mm from external face of stone. External lintels to be English Oak visible externally.
- 5.8 New roofs to be stepped as necessary to follow existing elevations (badly distorted from the probable original elevations).

6.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 There are no notable features worthy of specific preservation except as listed below:
- A Outer stone walls to all barns.
- B Possible cobblestone paving to part of yard.

7.0 OPINION

- 7.1 This report forms my professional opinion based on the facts available during inspection, no destructive investigation was carried out as none was considered necessary.
- 7.2 Urgent work is required to preserve the form and layout of the courtyard buildings.
- 7.3 These buildings will be lost to the Nation unless restoration works are carried out and the proposed use and design will be a positive contribution towards preserving these heritage buildings.

8.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 A suitable proposal for necessary works has been prepared and Listed Building Consent should be negotiated for the proposed works.

Signed

Dr H. Keith Farmer. PhD, MSc, MRICS, MCIQB.

Chartered building Surveyor

8.0 APPENDIX – Site Photographs as record of condition at 10 May 2022.



Figure 7 Yard elevation of threshing barn.



Figure 8. Yard elevation of Barn 2



Figure 9. Yard elevation of Barn 3



Figure 10 rear elevatio of barn 1



Figure 11. End elevation of Barn 6



Figure 122. Internal of end elevation of Barn 6

























