



## **Statement of Significance**

Harwood Farm, Pucklechurch  
BS16 9RF

May 2023

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# 1. Introduction

This document is submitted in support of proposed addition of PV panels to the south facing pitched roof of the modern garage within the boundary of the property known as Harwood Farm ("the property"), in Castle Road, Pucklechurch. This statement is to accompany the Application for Planning Permission.

South Gloucestershire Council (SGC) declared a Climate and Nature Emergency on 17 July 2019. Noting in particular the "need to urgently prepare for the local impacts of climate change, reduce our carbon emissions and protect and restore nature".

SGC has resolved to achieve Net Zero by 2030 and has signed up to the UK100 Pledge to provide the strategic community leadership needed to enable our communities to achieve 100% clean energy across all sectors.

These noble ambitions can only be realised if residents and businesses support SGC by actively engaging in their own efforts to combat climate change. It is in this vain that planning permission is sought for PV panels to be installed to which this statement supports.

The property is within a Conservation Area, however it is noted that the installation of PV panels to a property within a Conservation Area is permitted unless there is an Article 4 Direction in place for the area, the PV panels are to be affixed to a wall facing a highway or it is within the curtilage of a listed building. We note that neither is there an Article 4 Direction nor is the proposal to affix the PV panels to a wall facing a highway.

Therefore this statement is provided in support of the planning permission due to the fact that the garage is within the curtilage of the listed farmhouse. The garage is a modern addition (post 1960) and not itself subject to listed building requirements.

## 2. Context and Planning Policy

The property sits within the Pucklechurch Conservation Area. It sits on Castle Road amongst other locally listed buildings in the village. Whilst not affecting the setting, the property is also about 150m from the site of King Edwards Palace, a former Iron Age enclosed settlement and Anglo-Saxon hunting lodge at Cranford Farm that is now a Scheduled Ancient Monument. The property is mentioned twice within the text of the Pucklechurch Conservation Area SPD, adopted in 2010, in Section 3 relating to Westerleigh Road, Parkfield Road and Castle Road. In the text regarding Castle Road, it states

*The northern area by contrast, centred between Laurel, Harwood and Court Farms, has a more spacious, loose knit and rural character. The remnants of the north-west corner of the historic Burrell, together with the wide, grass roadside verges form an important, open green space bisected by the busy Westerleigh Road. The mature trees and planting in the grounds of Pucklechurch House, Beech House, Tall Trees and Court Farm also provide an important green backdrop against the skyline. An interesting mix of large farmhouses, small historic terraces, modern houses and natural stone boundary walls create a relatively continuous built edge to the area. Despite being surrounded by farmland on three sides, views of the surrounding countryside are limited to a distant view of the Cotswold Scarp along Castle Road. To the north of the area, the village becomes more loose-knit, with small cottages, garages and agricultural buildings creating a scattered rural edge to the village.*

Plan 1 - The Existing and Proposed Pucklechurch Conservation Area Boundaries



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The farmhouse is pictured on the following page, with the caption: *Harwood Farm, a fine and imposing 17th century farmhouse with later 18th century alterations.*

The SPD describes the Preservation and Enhancement Strategy:

- ▶ *Protect and enhance the important open green spaces, grass verges, trees, landscaping and traditional boundary treatments that contribute to the distinctive character of the area.*
- ▶ *Seek to reduce the adverse impact of traffic and parking on the historic village and ensure traffic management measures, street furniture and highway works are appropriate and sensitive to the historic character.*
- ▶ *Resist any further infill developments within the boundary of the conservation area that would harm the setting of historic properties or would adversely impact on the remaining open spaces.*

In the context of the Conservation Area, the farmhouse and modern garage front on to Castle Road. The proposal is only to affix PV panels on the South facing modern garage roof. There is no infill development or impact on either highways or green spaces. It is thus considered that the proposals are within the provisions of the above strategy.

Notwithstanding their differences in layout, both areas are characterised by the presence of large 17th and 18th century houses and terraced cottages alongside detached workers cottages, workshops and outbuildings. The close proximity of detached and detached buildings is an important part of the character of the conservation area. It is also evident in the architecture of the buildings, their form and general position within the street scene. The larger houses being set in gardens or landscaped grounds whilst the smaller, lower status buildings are positioned against the road or pavement.

The infilling of the gardens, former fields and remaining vestiges of open space with new buildings has compromised the rural setting of the larger houses. However a handful of developments have been sympathetic in their use of materials, scale and design, many of the 18th century villas houses have been successful. The gradual introduction of inappropriate materials, poor use of scale and proportions, and reckless construction details has started to erode the traditional and historic character of the area.

In both areas, increasing volumes of traffic and parking are having a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area, a situation that is likely to worsen with greater residential development around the periphery of Bristol and the increasing reliance on car travel.

The adverse network of telephone and power cables is also an extremely intrusive feature of the area, dominating views of the church and the other large houses and harming the overall character and appearance of the conservation area. The general clutter and deteriorating condition of road signs, bollards, poles and lighting is also detrimental and should be the focus of any future enhancement.



Harwood Farm, a fine and imposing 17th century farmhouse with later 18th century alterations.

#### Preservation and Enhancement Strategy

- ▶ *Protect and enhance the important open green spaces, grass verges, trees, landscaping and traditional boundary treatments that contribute to the distinctive character of the area.*
- ▶ *Seek to reduce the adverse impact of traffic and parking on the historic village and ensure traffic management measures, street furniture and highway works are appropriate and sensitive to the historic character.*
- ▶ *Resist any further infill developments within the boundary of the conservation area that would harm the setting of historic properties or would adversely impact on the remaining open spaces.*

The final section of the SPD is headed: Keeping and Enhancing the Character. It describes the overall aims as follows:

- 1) *Preserve and reinforce the historic character*
  - ▶ *Ensure repairs are carried out sensitively and that any works to listed or unlisted buildings, their features and surroundings are considered in relation to the historic context and use appropriate materials, scale and detailing.*
  - ▶ *Seek the retention and reinstatement of traditional details, windows, doors, chimneys and stone boundary walls. Resist the introduction of inappropriate boundary treatments.*
- 2) *Ensure that any new development (or alteration) respects the historic context*
  - ▶ *Encourage good quality design in all new development (or alteration) that is sympathetic to the character and appearance of the conservation area. Proposals should have regard to the historic grain and pattern of development, scale, form, massing, building lines and open spaces that contribute to the character of the conservation area.*
  - ▶ *New development should not adversely affect the setting of historic buildings, views or archaeological remains.*
  - ▶ *Encourage the use of traditional materials and construction details that have regard to the distinctive character and appearance of the conservation area.*
  - ▶ *Encourage sensitive redevelopment of visually intrusive or poor quality buildings when opportunities arise and promote high quality design that enhances the character or appearance of the conservation area.*
  - ▶ *Retain gardens and open spaces which contribute to the setting of historic properties and resist new development or uses harmful to the character and setting of the conservation area.*
- 3) *Minimise the impact of existing modern development*

- ▶ *Enhancement proposals should seek to reduce the impact of modern development and soften the impact of intrusive features by using native planting and natural stone walls.*
  - ▶ *Encourage the relevant utility companies to tackle the damaging and detrimental appearance of the overhead wires by routing them underground.*
  - ▶ *Seek to reduce the adverse impact of traffic and parking on the historic village and ensure traffic management measures, street furniture and highway works are appropriate and sensitive to the historic character.*
  - ▶ *Informal car parking and increasing traffic levels are having an adverse impact on the character of the conservation area.*
- 4) *Preserve and reinforce the vitality of the historic village*
    - ▶ *By ensuring alterations, new development or changes of use are appropriate and enhance its function.*

The proposal to affix PV panels to the modern garage roof are of minimal impact. The garage is a small, subservient structure relative to the main dwelling house and is of a modern design and build. The addition of PV panels to the south facing garage roof will have no impact on the historic character of the dwelling house given the existence of the modern garage already on the site and the modern developments (adjacent properties and school) surrounding the site.

There is no new development proposed.

Therefore the proposals would not contradict any of points 1 – 4 above.

### 3. English Heritage Listing

The official listing was added to the register in 1952 and describes the building thus:

*Heritage Category: Listed Building*

*Grade: II*

*List Entry Number: 1212366*

*Date first listed: 17-Sep-1952*

*Statutory Address: HARWOOD FARMHOUSE, CASTLE ROAD*

*5/188 Harwood Farmhouse 17.9.52 - II*

*Farmhouse, now house. Late C17, C18 doorcase, refenestrated C19. Coursed limestone rubble with stone dressings and quoins, plain tiled roof with gable stacks. 2½ storeys and 4 windows, all 3-light casements with chamfered mullions, hood mould and high relieving arch, except first floor 2nd from right, similar without relieving arch, at attic level 3 large gables rising to ridge height, each with 2-light casement with hood mould; all windows have leaded lights. 2nd from right, 6-panelled door with fanlight and radial glazing bars, engaged Doric column to each side with triglyph and guttae above each column, broken pediment. Right return has 2 single light casements at ground floor with leaded lights and hood mould. Interior: not inspected.*

*Listing NGR: ST7006876707*



## 4. Statement of Significance

Each of the buildings is described below. The text is supported by the photo on the front page of this statement.

**Farmhouse (GII listed):** As noted in the listing, this is an imposing late C17th farmhouse, constructed in limestone rubble with stone dressings. The roof was possibly once tiled with stone but is now plain tiled. External stone features are in good condition however are likely to have been renewed or subject to extensive repair over the years. Windows are painted metal framed with leaded lights. Repointing of stonework has historically been done with cement mortar rather than lime mortar. Rainwater goods have previously been renewed with materials other than cast iron.

There is a more modern single storey rear extension, but the date of it is indeterminate as a rear extension appears in historic maps.

Overall the building is well maintained, but internally little of the original remains. Roof timbers are generally not original.

Externally, the farmhouse is a significant part of the local streetscape, and the application does not propose to make any change that impacts on the farmhouse's streetscape. The interiors are less significant, due to the high degree of modification over the years.

**Barn:** This is a modest two-bay limestone barn under a clay tiled roof. It once faced out on to an open field, as evidenced in the OS maps of 1844-1888 and 1894-1903, however it is now hidden from view by modern properties built in front and the boundary hedge to the rear and hence is not visible from any public space.

The barn is less significant, and may well not have survived, were it not in the grounds of its more imposing partner. It is nonetheless a vernacular building with historic origins.

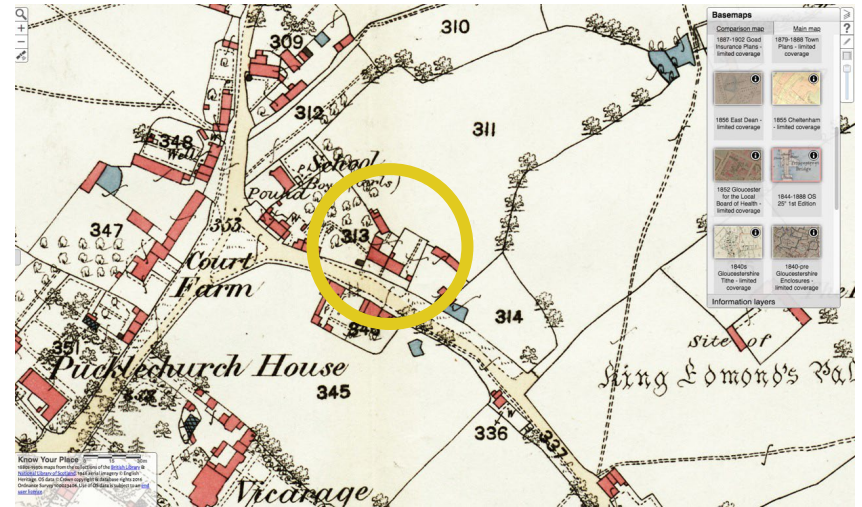
**Garage:** There is a modern garage within the property boundary – it is of no historical significance and was likely constructed in 1960s / 70s based on the time of other works to the main farmhouse and its concrete block and render construction.



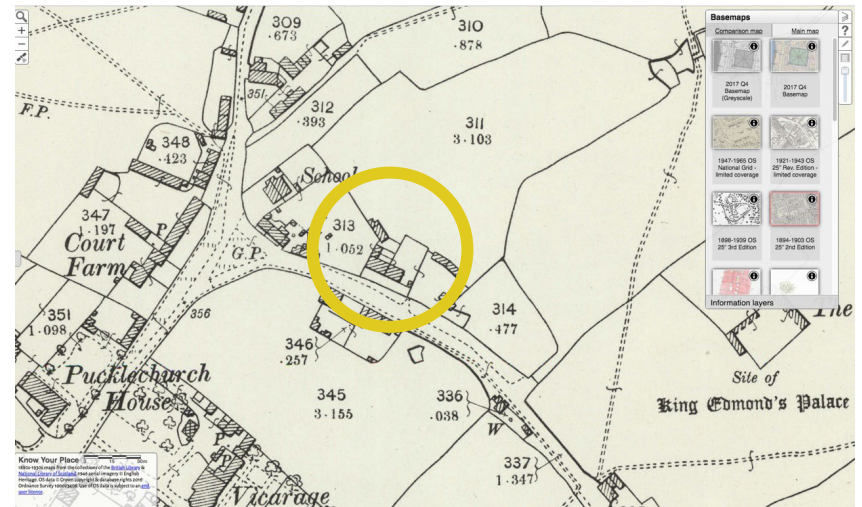
# Historic Maps



Extract from OS 1840s Tithe Map courtesy Know your Place



Extract from OS 1844-1888 courtesy Know your Place



Extract from OS 1894-1903 courtesy Know your Place

## 5. Conclusion/summary

The site contains three very different buildings.

The farmhouse is an imposing building, a key part of the streetscape, and in relatively good condition, although has lost many of its original features internally.

The barn to the rear, whilst not derelict, is in need of some repair. Like the house, it has been subject to inappropriate repairs in the past.

The modern garage is the smallest of the three buildings, it is detached, set back from the road and sitting away from the farmhouse to which it is subservient.

The addition of PV panels to the South facing pitched roof of the modern garage will be of no impact to the character of the farmhouse. As a modern building, the addition of PV panels within its existing roof line will have little effect on its overall appearance.

The addition of PV panels to homes and businesses is actively encouraged by South Gloucester Council in its efforts to reach carbon neutrality by 2030 and address the climate emergency.

Indeed, it is noted that numerous properties along Castle Road have PV panels affixed to their south facing property rooves.

The high costs associated with heating and lighting poorly insulated historic buildings has been compounded by the recent energy crisis. The installation of PV panels will help to reduce the overall energy costs, which in turn will make heating the property more affordable. Keeping an historic building dry and avoiding it becoming damp and cold will help to ensure it does not suffer preventable structural damage from rot, mould or woodworm infestation.

The addition of PV panels for listed buildings is a delicate balance between protecting our planet and protecting historical character. But where PV panels can be utilised on structures that are not subject to listed building regulations this should be encouraged and supported.