

Heritage Statement / Statement of Significance for:

Amendments to **Gaters Cottage Barn**

1 Gaters Cottage, Sandford, Crediton, Mid Devon, EX17 4LU



Rev	Issue	Amendments	Date
/	LBC ISSUE	n/a	07/02/23

1 - Introduction

This Heritage Statement accompanies an application for Listed Building Consent at 1 Gaters Cottage, Sandford which is seeking minor amendments to the Threshing Barn proposals consented under applications 21/02105/HOUSE and 21/02107/LBC.

A summary of the amended proposals is provided in the accompanying Design and Access Statement and justified in Section 6 of this Heritage Statement.

This statement is to be read in conjunction with all submitted forms, drawings and statements forming the application. Its content is limited to the specific amendments sought in this application and therefore it is also to be read in conjunction with the previously consented version of this Heritage Statement where appropriate, from which some information has not been repeated for simplicity.

2 - Planning Policy

Please refer to the previous Heritage Statement associated with applications 21/02105/HOUSE and 21/02107/LBC.

3 - Setting & Historical Development

3.1 Site Description and Historic Maps

Please refer to the previous Heritage Statement associated with applications 21/02105/HOUSE and 21/02107/LBC.

3.2 Statutory Designations

The property is joint listed (as the original farmhouse) with No 2 Gaters Cottage.

Historic England Listed Designation

NOS 1 AND 2 GATERS COTTAGES INCLUDING BARN ADJOINING TO NORTH

County: Devon

District: Mid Devon

Parish: Sandford

Date Listed: 20/05/85

National Grid Reference: SS 82553 02552

Farmhouse and barn, now 2 houses. Possibly C16-C17 core, remodelled in C18 and C19; subdivided circa 1970. Plastered cob on rubble footings; rubble stacks topped with C20 brick, wheat reed thatched roof. T-shaped building with 4-room main block facing south and rear block at right angles including barn at north end. No. 1 occupies 2 left (west) rooms and rear block, including barn; No. 2 occupies 2 right (east) rooms. 2 axial stacks to left rooms and 2 rear lateral stacks to right rooms. Two storeys. Overall regular 6-window front of late C19 and C20 casements, most with glazing bars. Door to No. 1 right of centre. Door to No. 2 in rear block. West front of rear block has 2-window front of C20 casements with glazing bars and central door to former threshing floor and ventilator to right. All roofs have hipped ends. Plain carpentry detail to both cottage interiors. Roof not inspected.

4.0 Current Character & State of Repair

Please refer to the previous Heritage Statement associated with applications 21/02105/HOUSE and 21/02107/LBC.

5.0 Evaluation of Setting & Significance

Please refer to the previous Heritage Statement associated with applications 21/02105/HOUSE and 21/02107/LBC.

6.0 Fabric Alterations & Justifications

Details of the amended proposals sought within this Listed Building Consent submission are described and justified as follows:

A. The new insulated floor in the Threshing Barn is to be a polished concrete ground-bearing slab, as opposed to the suspended timber floor previously consented.

Upon reflection of the previous consent, the Applicant now wishes to have a more robust and monolithic floor finish that is further in keeping with the agricultural quality of the Threshing Barn. From a heritage perspective, it is felt that a polished concrete floor represents a more appropriate treatment than the previously consented timber floor which is typically a more domestic treatment. A polished concrete floor will also be more dimensionally stable over the large floor area of the barn than a floating timber floor that may be more prone to annual heating cycles in a space that cannot be fully insulated due to heritage constraints. The slab will also provide a greater thermal mass to help in this respect.

Additionally, it will provide a better-practice constructional build-up to incorporate the impermeable radon membrane that has been determined will be required by Building Control.

B. The underside of the thatched roof is to be finished with reed mats and a breathable plaster, as opposed to being left untreated as per the previous application.

Having further considered the LPA's preference for the underside of the thatched roof to be left exposed in the previously consented application, the end result is deemed somewhat at odds to the now-established principle of residential use in the Threshing Barn. This is for the reason that it may introduce unnecessary airborne particles (in relation to asthma and the like) to what will be a habitable interior space, and may compromise the airtightness of the barn. Additionally, future routine replacement of the thatch will leave a degree of vulnerability to the weatherproofing of this part of the house.

The proposed ceiling detail requires only that a natural reed mat product is pinned to the underside of the timber rafters using traditional laths. The mat has a degree of flexibility and so can be applied malleably to the undulating historic timbers. A breathable plaster will still allow the roof to function correctly from a vapour control perspective. Only the outer rafters will be concealed, leaving all purlins and truss members visible. The proposed detail does not obscure an understanding of the construction of the historic roof and is such that it would be fully reversible.

C. The internal walls of the Threshing Barn are to be finished with a breathable insulating plaster and breathable paint finish, as opposed to lime plaster and lime wash as previously consented.

In any case, the internal faces of the exterior walls are in need of reasonable repair in order to be fit for the purpose of enclosing a habitable part of the house, and the principle of this is established. Having given this element of the proposals further consideration, it is opportune to integrate insulation improvements to the fabric of the barn if economically viable.

Consent is therefore sought to use a naturally-derived and breathable lime, cork and clay-based insulating plaster, rather than a non-insulating and solely lime-based plaster, if financially viable. The latter will be reverted to if this does not prove to be the case. Insulating breathable plaster is highly likely to benefit the comfort conditions of the space, and importantly, will not negatively affect the vapour control characteristics of the existing stone/cob wall nor detract from the contribution of the walls to the significance of the barn which is predominantly in their layout, apertures and general undulating form.

D. The replacement steps leading from the Cottage to the Threshing Barn are to be shallower and extended over a larger distance, as opposed to the shorter and steeper steps as previously consented.

The nature of this proposal is much the same as previously consented, with the difference that the steps are shallower and extended over a larger distance. This is deemed of limited consequence to the significance of the heritage asset.

The justification follows consideration by the Applicant further to the previous consent, as to the practicalities of moving between the Cottage and Threshing Barn in their later years. The shallower steps will ease this

considerably when compared to the existing steep steps. Please also refer to the note in the following point regarding the existing drainage constraints. As indicated on the enclosed detail drawing, a 1:5 ramp may also be constructed, should the gradient be deemed acceptable by Building Control. This would follow an identical constructional build-up with the immaterial difference that the concrete sub-structure is cast to falls rather than to steps.

D. Movement of door position between Cottage and Threshing Barn

The existing internal door position will be moved from the Threshing Barn face of the southerly dividing wall, to the Cottage face of the dividing wall. The door is non-original fabric. The alteration is justifiable on the basis it will create a practical and safe landing to the base of the internal steps which is not currently afforded. In any case, the stair cannot start further from the existing door position to afford a landing within the Threshing Barn as it would prohibit a sufficient chamber size over the existing essential manhole which is to be integrated in the new steps. Please refer to the enclosed detail drawing.

All disturbed surfaces around the door frame will be made good as per item C above.

7.0 Conclusion

The amended proposals are felt to have a limited *novel* effect on the significance of the Threshing Barn that was not previously assessed in the statements associated with applications 21/02105/HOUSE and 21/02107/LBC.

As such, it is felt the principle of the amendments remains acceptable when considered against the relevant policy considerations.

The amendments do not affect the understanding of the Heritage Asset, nor do they cause undue harm. They are all proposed with a view to enhancing the usability and practicality of the space as an integrated and comfortable part of the main cottage.