



# Heritage Statement

---

Asterleigh Farm  
Barns, Kiddington

October 2023 | Project Ref 7942A

HCUK Group is a multi-disciplinary environmental practice offering expert advice in archaeology, heritage, landscape, arboriculture, and planning. We began life as Heritage Collective LLP in 2010, before becoming Heritage Collective UK Limited in 2014. Finally, in 2020, we became HCUK Group Limited.



*No written content or imagery within this document has been generated using AI technology*

Project Number: 7942A

File Origin: C:\Users\Jody O'Reilly\HCUK Group\7501-8000 - Documents\7901-8000\07942 - Asterleigh Farm, Kiddington\HER\Reports\2022.09.28 Asterleigh Farm Barns Heritage Statement.docx

Version History	
JOR 2022.08.31 V1	
JOR 2023.10.01	

## Contents

<b>1. Introduction .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2. Relevant Planning Policy Framework.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3. Background and Development .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>4. Statement of Significance.....</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>5. Impact Assessment .....</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>6. Conclusions .....</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>7. Bibliography and references.....</b>	<b>53</b>

## Appendices

**App. 1 Scale of Harm table (HCUK, 2019)**

**App. 2 GPA3 Assessment: Historic England’s Guidance on Setting**

# 1. Introduction

**1.1** This Heritage Statement has been prepared by HCUK Group on behalf of Juxon Ltd. It relates to a planning application to West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC) to convert the historic farm buildings at Asterleigh Farm, west of the A44 in west Oxfordshire.

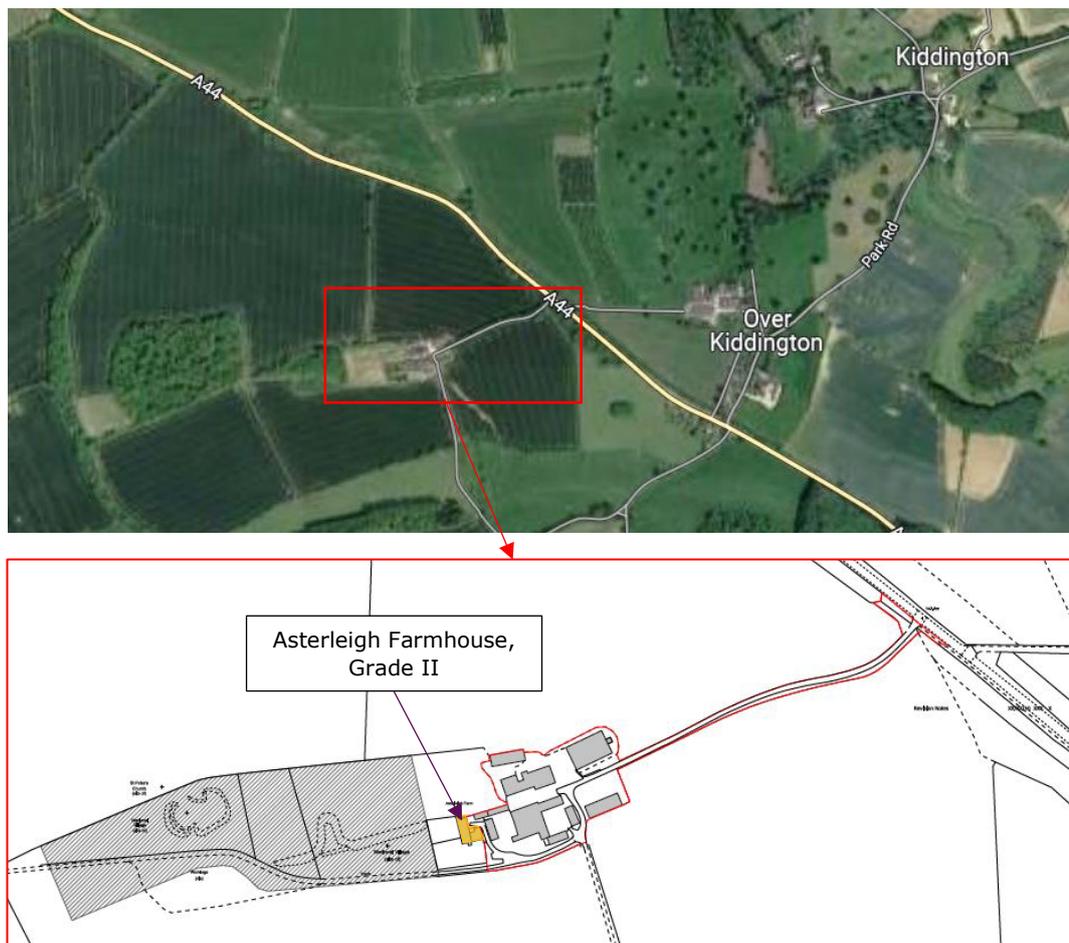


Figure 1: Location in relation to Kiddington and red line plan with listed building identified as well as area of scheduled monument (hatched area).

**1.2** Asterleigh Farmhouse (historically sometimes referred to as Asterley Farmhouse) is a grade II listed building (UID: 1367898). There is no other listed building within 500m of the site and the site is not within a conservation area, the south western edge of the Grade II Registered Park of Kiddington Hall is located just 500m to the north east but is divided from the site by fields, hedges and the A44 road. The degree of separation between the site and the Registered Park and the nature of

the proposals is such that there is considered no potential for the significance of the registered parkland to be affected by proposals. For this reason the only designated asset considered of relevance within this report is Asterleigh Farmhouse. With consideration of the provisions of Section 1.5(b) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990, and the relevant Historic England Guidance on the matter<sup>1</sup> the farm buildings are considered to be part of the extent of the listed buildings. This does not mean they should be treated as individually listed buildings for the purposes of decision making but as part of the main listed building, which is the farmhouse.

- 1.3** The Deserted Medieval Settlement of Asterleigh is a scheduled monument immediately outside the red line boundary. Further scheduled monuments are located to the south and south west. All archaeological matters are covered separately in a desk based report by RPS Consulting.

## The Context

- 1.4** Initial pre-application discussion with WODC was undertaken during 2022 (ref: 22/02578/PREAPP) to explore the potential to redevelop the farm buildings, providing them with new uses including residential. The farm buildings, even the more recent ones, are no longer in active use for agricultural purposes and all farming operation has been relocated. Without a viable use the buildings are declining in condition, particularly the historic buildings. Woldon Architects prepared a pre-application submission for discussion with planning information provided by Edgars Planning Consultancy.
- 1.5** The principle of conversion was broadly agreed as a viable means of securing these building's for the future and halting their current ongoing decline. The fact of their inappropriateness for modern agricultural use was acknowledged as was their declining condition rendering alternate uses as a matter of importance to avoid future loss. A second round of consultation covered matters of detail on the various aspects of the conversion of the traditional barns was undertaken in August 2023 (23/01901/PREAPP).

---

<sup>1</sup> Listed Buildings and Curtilage Historic England Advice Note 10 (2018) and in particular case study 2.4.

- 1.6** A Class Q application has also been submitted for the modern barns (Buildings 8-11, See Figure 2) but is not yet determined (Ref: 23/02478/PN56).
- 1.7** The scheme presented now has incorporated feedback from WODC and been revised to lessen impacts on the historic buildings and features of interest securing a sensitive proposal for an alternate use that sustains the historic and architectural values of the buildings.
- 1.8** This report has been informed by a site visit where the majority of buildings were inspected internally and externally (where safe to do so) and by background research. The farmhouse was not inspected internally, it falls outside the application site and will not be altered in any way by proposals except in as much as the farm buildings are considered to be part of its interest. Additional site visits after the pre-application consultation process has expanded knowledge of the internal character of some of the barns not initially available for view. Building numbers within this report are with reference to the assignment within the architectural pack as shown below. Note, Barns 8-11 are discussed within this report only in as much as they form part of the setting of the listed building.



Figure 2: Building identification numbers.

## Purpose of this Statement

- 1.9** This statement sets out a discussion of the significance of the designated asset – Asterleigh Farmhouse – as well as the contribution made by its setting. The farm buildings are being considered as part of the listed building under the curtilage provision of the 1990 Act. The farm buildings are a mix of historic structures dating back to the 18<sup>th</sup> century, 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century additions and some much more recent barn structures. The contribution that the farm buildings make to the significance of the listed farmhouse is considered.
- 1.10** Following this an impact assessment is provided considering how the important features of the buildings, those which contribute to their heritage values and to the significance of the listed farmhouse are preserved or enhanced through the proposals. Whether any elements of the scheme gives rise to harm is also assessed and where relevant this harm is balanced against any heritage benefits. Further public benefits can also be weighed against any heritage harm identified and these are set out within the planning case by Edgars to which readers are directed. Reference should also be had to the drawing pack from Woldon Architects and all archaeological matters are covered within the Desk Based Assessment from RPS Consulting.

## 2. Relevant Planning Policy Framework

- 2.1** The decision maker is required by section 66 (1) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building and its setting when exercising planning functions. The decision maker must give considerable importance and weight to the desirability of preserving the significance of the listed building, and there is a strong presumption against the grant of permission for development that would harm its heritage significance.<sup>2</sup>
- 2.2** For the purposes of this pre-application statement, preservation equates to an absence of harm.<sup>3</sup> Harm is defined in paragraph 84 of Historic England's Conservation Principles as change which erodes the significance of a heritage asset.<sup>4</sup>
- 2.3** The significance of a heritage asset is defined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as being made up of four main constituents: architectural interest, historical interest, archaeological interest and artistic interest. The assessments of heritage significance and impact are normally made with primary reference to the four main elements of significance identified in the NPPF.
- 2.4** The setting of a heritage asset can contribute to its significance. Setting is defined in the NPPF as follows:
- The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.*
- 2.5** Historic England has produced guidance on development affecting the setting of heritage assets in The Setting of Heritage Assets (second edition, December 2017), better known as GPA3. The guidance encourages the use of a stepped approach to

---

<sup>2</sup> Barnwell Manor Wind Energy Limited v East Northamptonshire District Council and others [2014] EWCA Civ 137. This principle has recently been confirmed, albeit in a lower court, in R (Wyeth-Price) v Guildford Borough Council.

<sup>3</sup> South Lakeland v SSE [1992] 2 AC 141.

<sup>4</sup> Conservation Principles, 2008, paragraph 84.

the assessment of effects on setting and significance, namely (1) the identification of the relevant assets, (2) a statement explaining the significance of those assets, and the contribution made by setting, (3) an assessment of the impact of the proposed development on the setting and significance of the assets, and (4) consideration of mitigation in those cases where there will be harm to significance.

**2.6** The NPPF requires the impact on the significance of a designated heritage asset<sup>5</sup> to be considered in terms of either “substantial harm” or “less than substantial harm” as described within paragraphs 201 and 202 of that document. National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) makes it clear that substantial harm is a high test, and case law describes substantial harm in terms of an effect that would vitiate or drain away much of the significance of a heritage asset.<sup>6</sup> The Scale of Harm is tabulated at Appendix 1.

**2.7** Paragraphs 201 and 202 of the NPPF refer to two different balancing exercises in which harm to significance, if any, is to be balanced with public benefit.<sup>7</sup> Paragraph 18a-020-20190723 of National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) online makes it clear that some heritage-specific benefits can be public benefits. Paragraph 18a-018-20190723 of the same NPPG makes it clear that it is important to be explicit about the category of harm (that is, whether paragraph 201 or 202 of the NPPF applies, if at all), and the extent of harm, when dealing with decisions affecting designated heritage assets, as follows:

*Within each category of harm (which category applies should be explicitly identified), the extent of the harm may vary and should be clearly articulated.*

**2.8** Paragraphs 199 and 200 of the NPPF state that great weight should be given to the conservation of a designated heritage asset when considering applications that affect its significance, irrespective of how substantial or otherwise that harm might be.

---

<sup>5</sup> The seven categories of designated heritage assets are World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, Protected Wreck Sites, Registered Park and Gardens, Registered Battlefield and Conservation Areas, designated under the relevant legislation.

<sup>6</sup> Bedford Borough Council v SSCLG and Nuon UK Limited [2013] EWHC 4344 (Admin).

<sup>7</sup> The balancing exercise was the subject of discussion in City and Country Bramshill v CC SLG and others [2021] EWCA, Civ 320.

## Local Planning Policy

**2.9** West Oxfordshire District Local Plan 2031 contains text and policy pertaining to the Historic environment from paragraph 8.81 onwards. Policy EH9 is an overarching policy covering the Historic Environment and seeking to conserve and/or enhance the special character, appearance and distinctiveness of West Oxfordshire’s historic environment.

**2.10** Policy EH11 relates to listed buildings and extends to include development within their curtilage or that affects the setting of listed buildings. It states that such development 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”*

**2.11** Policy EH12 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.”*

**2.12** Policy EH13 covers Historic Landscape Character and Policy EH15 covers Scheduled monuments and other nationally important archaeological remains. These subjects are outside the scope of this report.

## Guidance

- 2.13** Historic England have published a guidance document '*Adapting Traditional Farm Buildings; Best Practice Guidelines for Adaptive Reuse*' (2017). This document emphasises that England's traditional farm buildings and farm groups form a key part of the varied English landscape and are fundamental to sense of place. However, it also acknowledges that many such buildings and groups are redundant in modern agricultural practice and as they lack a viable income from such uses to keep them in good repair they have the potential to accommodate a variety of new uses that can be achieved while sustaining their interest and contribution to the historic grain and character of our countryside.
- 2.14** The document begins from a point that the heritage values of such places should be understood – irrespective of whether or not they are listed – as a start point to inform sensitive and sustainable change which avoids poor adaptations and encourages new commercial, residential or other uses that better reveal their heritage character and sustain those values into the future.
- 2.15** Guidance on how to assess the setting of heritage assets is, as mentioned above set out in Historic England's Good Practice Advice Note: The Setting of Heritage Assets (second edition, December 2017), better known as GPA3. The process advocated in this document has been followed for this assessment and a table showing the results of the detailed assessment can be found at Appendix 2.

## 3. Background and Development

- 3.1** Asterleigh was once a separate parish and large rural settlement. Though not recorded as separate in the domesday book, by 1279 and the Hundred rolls it featured 20 farms. The settlement declined however, potentially due to impacts from the Black Death and in 1466 it was absorbed into the parish of Kiddington<sup>8</sup>.
- 3.2** By the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century all that remained of Asterleigh was a farm, occupied by yeoman farmers who leased from the Lord of Kiddington Manor, Sir George Browne. In 1754, the rent was £134 per annum<sup>9</sup>. The Browne Family, Baronets, held Kiddington Manor from 1615 and made Kiddington Park their home from the mid 17<sup>th</sup> century through to the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century when the Baronetcy became extinct. The Browne family commissioned Capability Brown to reorder the park in the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century. In 1840 Kiddington Park passed to Mortimer Ricardo, son of David Ricardo, renowned politician and political economist. He remodelled the house using architect Charles Barry. Held by the Robson family throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century Asterleigh farm only became separated from the main estate in the early 2000s when the Estate was sold.
- 3.3** The earliest map available is the Ordnance Surveyors drawing of 1814 (Figure 3). This shows the farmstead as a rectangular plot with a scatter of buildings, accessed as today from the east. A belt of woodland runs across the area north of the farmstead.
- 3.4** Though relatively low on detail this shows that the farmhouse, with its 'L' shaped footprint is present as are some of the barns further to the east, a liner building is located to the south with an 'L' shaped block at the eastern end – the northern part of this may equate to the threshing barn now identified as the eastern part of Barn 2, which actually comprises two threshing barns connected by an intermediate structure.

---

<sup>8</sup> Emery, Frank (1974). *The Oxfordshire Landscape. The Making of the English Landscape*. London: Hodder & Stoughton. pp. 101–102

<sup>9</sup> Lease in Oxfordshire History Centre, Ref: B.I/102, lease for 6, 12 or 21 years from Sir George Browne, Bart. To George Buskin of Asterleigh, Yeoman.



Figure 3: 1814 OSD (British Library Map Collections)

### 3.5

In 1814 the farm's stock and all farm and domestic contents was sold at auction, publicised in local press (Figure 4). The farm appears to have been mixed, with sheep as the primary livestock.

*Farming Stock, Household Furniture, Dairy and Brewing Utensils.*  
**TO BE SOLD BY AUCTION,**  
*By Messrs. CHURCHILL & TURNER,*  
 On FRIDAY and SATURDAY, the 27th and 28th days of  
 MAY, 1814,  
**A**LL the FARMING STOCK, Implements in Husbandry, Household Furniture, Dairy and Brewing Utensils, on the premises of Mr. John Kench, at Asterley Farm, near Kiddington, in the county of Oxford, (under an execution, by order of the Sheriff of Oxfordshire); consisting of 9 stout useful draught horses, a grey pony, 65 ewes and lambs, 7 barren ewes, 56 ewe tegs, 13 ram tegs, 3 shearling rams, 4 narrow-wheel waggons, 3 dung carts, 1 Dutch cart, 5 ploughs, 3 pair of harrows, 1 pair of drags, roll and frame, thrashing machine complete, winnowing machine, 8 staddles, 30 dozen gate hurdles, plough and waggon timber, harness for 10 horses, and other farming implements, with all the neat household furniture, 2 coppers, tubs, casks, 2 barrel churns, 5 milk leads, cream cistern, dairy and brewing utensils.  
 The farming stock, and implements, and dairy utensils, will be sold the first day; the household furniture and brewing utensils, the last day.—The sale to begin each morning at 11 o'clock.—Catalogues may be had at the Inns in Chipping-Norton, Enstone, Charlbury, Kiddington, the Printing Offices, High-street, Oxford; place of sale; and of the Auctioneers', Woodstock.

Figure 4: 1814 advertisement in the Oxford City and University Herald for sale at Asterley Farm (British Newspaper Archive)

**3.6** In 1851 the farm was occupied by William Baker, his wife and young family (1851 census). He is recorded as a farmer of 321 acres employing 13 labourers. His brother was also resident and recorded as farm Bailiff. The Bakers remained at Asterley Farm until 1853 when again all stock and the contents of the farm and house were put up for sale, the livestock at this point being mainly cattle.



Figure 5: May 1853 Sale advertisement in the *Oxfordshire chronicle, Berks and Bucks Gazette* (British Newspaper Archive)

**3.7** The farm is not detailed on the tithe map for Kiddington (dated relatively late in 1850), the area is simply labelled as 'part of Kiddington Manor' and the earliest detailed map is the Ordnance survey six inches to one mile map of 1884, based on a survey of 1876 (figure 6). Further detail is given on the broadly contemporary but larger scale 25 inches to one mile map edition published in 1881 (Figure 7). The farm at this point is divided into three yards, a smaller yard directly east of the farmhouse with a narrow range on its north side, and two larger square yards divided by an 'E' shaped arrangement of buildings to the north and free standing structure and pond on the southern edge between the yards and the track running to the southern side of the farm. The farm house has gardens depicted to the south and west and the area of the former medieval settlement is marked, as well as being a site of quarrying.



Figure 6: 1884 six inches to one mile map (National Library of Scotland Maps collection)



Figure 7: 1881 25 inches to one mile map edition (National Library of Scotland Maps collection) Note the suggested pond on the southern side of the central yard indicated by its irregular shape to contrast it from buildings.

### 3.8

At the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, by the 1900 six inches map the central of the three yards had been infilled, and additional structure added to the western side of the western yard east of the farmhouse. The farm developed further with a long range added to the north in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and after 1955 further large buildings added to the east of the historic core, the later 20<sup>th</sup> century also saw the route of the access road altered to extended directly into the group to the north of the historic barns. The official footpath route today follows the line of the historic approach drive, but the diagonal route to the south has been built over with one of the open portal barns and the track now runs parallel to the easternmost historic structure.



Figure 8: 1900 six inches to one mile map extract (National Library of Scotland Maps collection)



Figure 9: 1925 25 inches to one mile map extract (National Library of Scotland Maps collection) Note the stable on the southern side of the eastern yard (Barn 6) is not shown

## Existing Conditions

### 3.9

This section provides a description of the buildings and barns at Asterleigh Farm. For consistency the numbering of each building is as shown in Figures 2 and 10 taken from Woldon's drawing pack. Some buildings are described together where they have consistent function or aesthetics, and the barn identification numbers spans multiple structural units in some cases. All buildings were inspected internally to some degree though the structural safety of some buildings meant that some areas were only seen through openings within the walls, not fully accessed. These limitations have not prevented a sufficient understanding of their quality and significance.



Figure 10: Building identification, where the numbers cover two structures, letters A and B have been assigned to assist in understanding in the following text.

## Asterleigh Farmhouse

**3.10** A stone built farmhouse converted to form two dwellings, with an 'L' shaped footprint with small porches added to north and south elevations of the southern range. Its list description provides a succinct summary of its appearance as follows:

*"Farmhouse, now divided. Late C17 or early C18, with C19 addition. Squared and coursed limestone with slate roof. L-plan. Two storeys and gable-lit attic, with 2-storey addition. Chamfered plinth and integral stone-end stacks with weatherings. Two-window front; late C20 wooden casements with flat stone arches and stone cills. Central C20 half-glazed door with rectangular 3-part overlight. C19 two-storey addition to right with stone end stack and C20 two-light wooden casement to each floor, that to ground floor with wooden lintel. Interior: left-hand ground-floor room with chamfered spine beam and partly blocked fireplace to left with wooden lintel. Chamfered beams in first floor of rear wing."* (Historic England Statutory List Description)

**3.11** The farmhouse is a solid building of local stone beneath a grey slate roof, almost certainly a much later replacement of what would most likely have been a local stone slate roof originally. The windows are all modern, though some splayed stone

lintels survive. Various additions with lean-to roofs have expanded the footprint with a two storey addition added to the eastern gable of the southern range.



*Figure 11: southern façade of the farmhouse.*



*Figure 12: Western façade of the farmhouse with roofs of the historic farm buildings behind.*

## Barn 1

**3.12** This structure actually comprises two narrow linear ranges immediately east of the farmhouse. They are single storey with mixed stone and brick construction and stable type split doors.

**3.13** The northern range is slightly earlier, dating to the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to appear on later 19<sup>th</sup> century maps; it does not seem to be indicated on the Ordnance Surveyors drawing but is in place by the 1880s. It is a stable, a use

which it retains, with subdivisions into individual cells entered from the southern side. The materials are again a mixture of red brick and stone with slightly more ornamental features such as carved kneeler blocks at the gable ends and moulded blocks in some of the doorways. The moulded blocks at the gables are a match to those seen on the main threshing barn suggesting the buildings are contemporary.



*Figure 13: Building 1A, the northern range of stables.*



*Figure 14: internal view of one of the stables at the western end the roof has been renewed here.*



Figure 15: Building 1B: the western stable, a later addition.



Figure 16-17: (left) interior of the western range of Barn 1; (right) view of the stone kneeler at the end of the northern stable, a matched detail to one of the two threshing barns making up building 2.

### 3.14

The western range (Building 1B) was inspected through a window in the southern gable revealing a single open space divided with concrete rendered stalls beneath a regular sawn roof structure of iron reinforced king post trusses. The map regression shows this structure as being built in the last two decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. A blocked doorway is legible on the southern gable, now filled in to form a window.



*Figure 18: View along the northern edge of Building 2 looking towards the chimney and roof of the farmhouse and gable end of Building 1, the left hand structure is earlier, the far right one a later addition with later infilling structure in red brick.*

## Barn 2

### 3.15

A long range forming the northern edge of the historic group Building 2 actually covers two historic threshing barns with a linking section (Figure 18). The eastern of the two barns (2B) has been heavily adapted with a floor inserted throughout and brick, concrete block and cement lined pigsties inserted beneath but the roof structure, and the early Ordnance Surveyor's drawing suggests it is the older of the two structures. The threshing doors are blocked, though their outline remains legible in the external walls. The walls of the barn also feature several blocked triangular ventilation holes. Wide metal framed windows have been inserted through the southern façade lighting the pigsty feeding passage. The first floor area was viewed through the opening in the northern elevation revealing a single open space with four very simple tie-beam and collar trusses and strings of butt purlins with through tenons.

**3.16** The adaptation of this barn, and Barn 3, for internal accommodation of pigs appears to be in line with trends from the later 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries for mass 'piggeries' sometimes called 'Scandinavian Piggeries' which included long rows of low pens with a narrow passage for feeding and drainage.<sup>10</sup>



*Figures 19-20: the blocked threshing door and one of the windows inserted in the southern elevation of Barn 2B with internal view of the open first floor area and link through to the intermediate structure.*



*Figure 21: blocked triangular ventilation hole in the northern elevation of Barn 2B with scar from removed tallet steps beneath.*

<sup>10</sup> Brunskill 1982, p76

**3.17** The western barn (2A) retains paired threshing doors with high floor structures to either side with some machinery and equipment retained. The trusses are substantial and well formed king-post trusses with concealed coach bolts and slightly expanded heads against which the principal rafters thrust. The barn is probably mid 19<sup>th</sup> century in date based upon the map evidence and nature of the trusses.



*Figures 22-23: (left) internal view within western part of Barn 2 and (right) the eastern side of the barn showing substantial king post trusses and floor structures in the end bays flanking the threshing doors.*

**3.18** The barn is enclosed on the south side by Building 4 and openings have been created into this space to either side of the threshing door opening. Smaller narrow ventilation slits are present in this barn as well – historically necessary to secure ventilation around any stored grain – but in this barn they are tall and narrow with a diagonal hole at the top, like a candle.

**3.19** The connecting structure features a series of small sub-divisions at ground level in a similar pig sty style to the adjacent barn and at first floor an open area with iron windows and collapsed trusses, this structure is near collapse and the seriously displaced walls are propped against collapse by boards. The roof structure is collapsed into the space.



*Figures 24-25: (Left the south western elevation of the threshing barn 2A with inserted opening and narrow 'candle' ventilation slit and, (right) concrete block subdivisions in the lower part of the linking structure.*



*Figure 26-27: Metal framed window in linking structure, note lean on red brick wall (image view point constrained by scaffold access) and, (right) interior of the linking structure with central truss collapsed on the floor and no longer supporting the roof.*

## Barn 3

**3.20** A north to south single storey range now partly collapsed. Internally adapted to accommodate pigsties there is evidence in the eastern wall of where the structure was extended to join Building 6 in the last decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (see historic maps), the consistent roof form of well sawn members and queen-strut trusses (no collars only struts between tie-beam to rafters) suggests it was re-roofed at this time, the character of the roof is in keeping with many of the buildings suggesting a comprehensive programme of renovation or improvement at this time in the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

**3.21** The western wall of this structure featured red brick dressings to a regular series of openings now internalised within Building 4.



*Figure 28: Looking across eastern yard towards Barn 3 with later blockwork walling, stone pier (arrowed) marks end of older structure, possibly open sided, the roof is partially collapsed but a consistent structure spanning older and later portions.*



*Figure 29: Partial inspection of the feeding passage within Building 3, the wall with openings on the right is to Building 4, the cement rendered stall partitions are visible in the centre of the picture, a blockwork partition visible to the left of the doorway.*

## Barn 4

**3.22** This building is a large late 19<sup>th</sup> century structure with steel truss roof and clerestory louvered windows over arcade aisles supported on timber posts with straight braces. The form suggests that this was a covered yard for cattle though no feeding troughs or mangers remain. These types of structures were introduced as significant innovations in planned and on new estate model farms between c.1850-1880 after agricultural chemists proved that manure preserved under cover had higher nutrient value<sup>11</sup>. Earlier farmsteads were also adapted with such features in the period after 1880, infilling earlier open yards as at Asterleigh Farm.

**3.23** The eastern wall of the barn is not part of this structure, but the earlier Building 3 to which the later cover was added over and on top of, the same is true of the northern wall which is part of the older Threshing barn which this structure abuts. It would appear likely that the addition of this building coincided with a shift away

<sup>11</sup> Historic England 'National Farm Building Types' (2014)

from arable uses of the barns towards animal rearing and accommodation, likely cattle in this area and pigs in the eastern part of Barn 2B and Building 3.

## Barn 5

- 3.24** A modern steel structure covering over and infilling a courtyard between older buildings on all sides. Steel posts and truss with corrugated sheet roof over a concrete floor.



*Figure 30: Building 4, southern façade, infilled arched opening and blocked roundel window. The vertical portions to either side are louvered along the long elevations.*



*Figure 31: interior of covered yard looking south with steel tension trusses, the clerestory and posts supporting the peripheral 'aisles'.*



*Figure 32: Interior of Building 5 covering the former yard between Barn 2B on the right and the collapse Building 3 in the centre and left.*



*Figure 33: Barn 6 though on an historic footprint apparently a much later reconstruction.*

## Barn 6

**3.25** This is a shorter linear stone range opening into the yard covered over by Barn 5, it has four sets of split stable doors and stone walls beneath a slate roof. The doorway openings though of a traditional stable door type appear to be later or amended openings with cement, blockwork and modern brickwork defining them. This building is not shown on the 1925 large scale edition Ordnance Survey map, reappearing on later editions suggesting it has been rebuilt on an historic footprint shown on the older maps. The rear wall features a membrane damp proof course.

**3.26** Internally the structure is divided into low divided cells or stalls, much like the sties seen in Buildings 1B, 2B and 3. The rear wall and internal partitions include areas of concrete blockwork and fletton brick. The roof trusses are relatively light scantling and in two locations are resting over window openings rather than securely onto the main walls.



*Figure 34: Rear wall of Building 6 with visible DPC*



*Figure 35: concrete blockwork internally within Building 6.*

## Barn 7

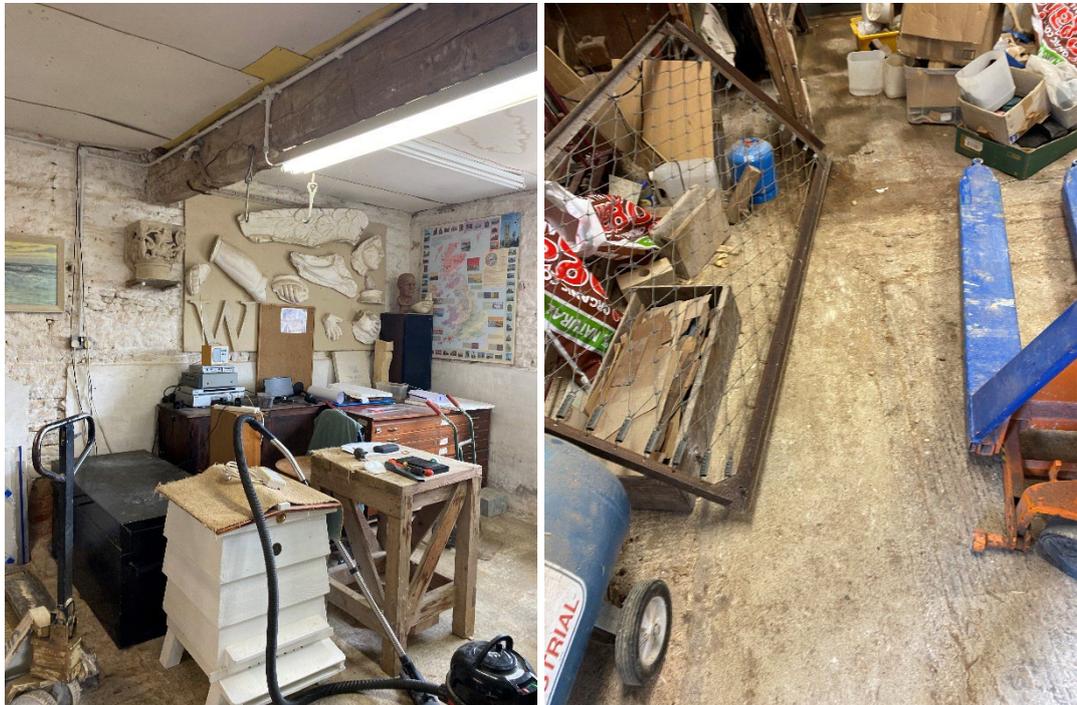
**3.27** A two storey stone built structure with hay loft doors to the north gable. Currently in use as a workshop it was once likely a stable block. The current occupier a stone mason, reported that he had to reinstate the first floor joists to use the upper levels, though the principal joists are remaining historic structure. The roof trusses are king post form as with Building 2A though somewhat lighter weight as are the purlins which are more like planks, the common rafters are also very slender leading up to a ridge plate. No mangers or stall dividers survive in the ground floor area though some areas of brick and stone flooring suggest the former arrangement to a small degree. A hayloft door survives in the northern gable, openings in the southern gable are smaller windows.



*Figure 36: Barn 7 with Barn 8 to the right.*



Figure 37: Roof structure in Building 7



Figures 38-39: The interior of the former stable with the modern ceiling over historic principle joists and fragments of stone flooring with concrete elsewhere.

## Barns 8-11

**3.28** Modern structures constructed from steel beams and posts, concrete, reinforced concrete, prefabricated trusses and corrugated or other sheet cladding material. Barn 11 sits in the approximate location of an earlier linear range shown on early 20<sup>th</sup> century maps but is clearly a more recent structure, an open sided hay store.



*Figures 40-41: (left) the northern side of Barn10 with (right) Barn 11. None of these structures is of historic interest.*

**3.29** The farmstead sits within a relatively open landscape today, with rougher and scrubby overgrowth to the west in the area of the scheduled monument. The farmhouse is furthest away from the approaching drive and the listed building is screened from view until the farm buildings have all been passed. Today there are two approaches, one taking the historic route south of the farm buildings, and a later drive between the historic and more recent buildings running straight on from the drive way. There is no evidence of any historic surfacing within the yard areas, and only fragmentary areas within some of the buildings. Small areas of brick surface remain in Buildings 1, 2A and 7, elsewhere is almost exclusively concrete.



*Figure 42: The approach to Asterleigh Farm from the east. The modern barn (Building 8) to the southeast is most prominent and the farmhouse is not visible at all.*



*Figure 43: The farm group from the west and the edge of the scheduled monument, the slightly higher ground on the northern side elevates the prominence of the later 20<sup>th</sup> century structures which dominate the older ranges.*

## 4. Statement of Significance

### Assessment of Significance

- 4.1** This chapter of the report establishes the significance of the relevant heritage assets in the terms set out in the NPPF, and it comments on the contribution of setting to significance as well as the contribution made by the farm buildings when they are considered as part of the listed building.

### Asterleigh Farmhouse

- 4.2** This building primarily derives its significance from its architectural and historic values.

### Architectural values

- 4.3** The building's fabric and surviving features illustrate and give evidence to traditional construction techniques in this area and traditional domestic planforms. The physical fabric of the building illustrates carpentry and masonry techniques and practice, where decorated individual tastes and domestic styles may be reflected.
- 4.4** The architectural interest is augmented in the agricultural buildings which add a layer of contrast between the domestic tradition of the house and the larger scale agricultural structures of the farm. These structures add interest to the listed farm house but are distinct. The structural contrast of scale, different types, and most likely lesser degree of decorative finish adds to architectural interest, there are features which show an aesthetic attention to detail, particularly in the carved stone kneelers to the raised gable coping on Barns 2A and 1B. The material qualities remain broadly vernacular, as does the simple collar and butt purlin roof of Barn 2B, but as mainly 19<sup>th</sup> century structures many of the farm buildings also appear to indicate shifts to more standardised forms of roof trusses and in some machine sawn and metal reinforced structures which relied less on local traditions. Later adaptations of the buildings in mass produced brick, concrete block and cement have moved fully beyond the vernacular and though they continue to illustrate historic uses associated with animal husbandry they have no innate architectural values.

## Historic Value

- 4.5** Historically it is a domestic dwelling, which is linked to a coherent farm group and, more widely, to a country estate. It reflects both this wider estate history but also the specific domestic history of this dwelling in its planform and any surviving fixtures or fittings. The shared ownership with the manorial estate at Kiddington was dissolved in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century the association remains documented in records and the farmhouse, and its associated functional buildings, continues to illustrate the extent of manorial holdings of the Kiddington Estate.
- 4.6** The garden areas are distinct from the farm buildings illustrating the provision of private domestic areas separate from the working operation and these areas continue to enable inspection of the primary facades of the farmhouse and its external details.
- 4.7** The building has been much altered, including new porches, replacement windows and subdivision to form two dwellings. These elements have not been assessed in detail but are likely to have lessened and eroded the illustrative and evidential values of the farmhouse.
- 4.8** The building derives no significance from artistic values, all aesthetic qualities being part of the architectural strand of value here.
- 4.9** Archaeologically, the farmhouse's value is heavily linked to the wider evidence for the settlement of Asterleigh – discussed in more detail within the Archaeological Desk Based Assessment – as this farmstead remained the only point of occupation and activity on this ancient site after the abandonment of the wider settlement. The building itself will have some archaeological potential to yield further information about specific episodes or phases of change or alteration that may not be recorded in other sources.

## Contribution of the farm buildings

- 4.10** Considered as part of the listed building through the provisions of Section 1.5(b) of the Act, the farm buildings remain separate structures which have individual qualities and past functions. They contribute to the architectural and historic values

of the farmhouse in particular and in the way it can be understood as a domestic core of an agricultural group overall.

- 4.11** The farm buildings illustrate different functions and practice associated with mixed farming from probably the 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards. Early traditional farming practices from the 18<sup>th</sup> century are considered to particularly linked and associated with the farmhouse, which has origins in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, so these earlier farm buildings have a great degree of integrity with this early core representing a strong strand of illustrative and evidential value pertaining to the early history of the farmstead as a whole.
- 4.12** Early buildings are those shown on the Ordnance Surveyors Drawing at Figure 4 which although somewhat indistinct appears to be represented today by the eastern of the threshing barns (2B). Early footprints of buildings are also suggested in the locations of Buildings 3 and 6 but the material qualities of these structures today show little integrity with an 18<sup>th</sup> century character. By 1888 almost all other structures are shown on the historic maps, other than the covered yards. These structures have a good degree of consistency in their stone walls, roof trusses and in their layout defining a series of enclosed yards. None survives entirely intact and later changes, particularly reconstruction and subdivision have removed historic partitions and character lessening their innate architectural interest. The historic legibility of these buildings relates primarily to their later uses - often associated with animal accommodation. Where older walls, roofs and individual features such as the ventilation openings into the barn, or carved stone kneelers survive, they add to interest reflecting architectural care and quality, and the historic investment in presenting a coherent group of farm buildings.
- 4.13** The later 19<sup>th</sup> century structures of the farm buildings illustrate a period of investment and change at the farmstead, particularly in the provision for animal husbandry and stock being wintered under cover to manage manure to augment the arable crops. Building 4, a covered yard, is particularly indicative of this later phase and is the most substantial structure added to the farm at this time. Covered yards of this type, where purposes built as a part of a mid-19<sup>th</sup> century model farm, often for country estates are quite significant and many are listed<sup>12</sup>. Historic

---

<sup>12</sup> A simple search for "covered yard" on the 'search the list facility brings up 116 results. Two such barns are listed within Oxfordshire, one near Eastleach, part of a planned model farm at Beer Furlong dating to 1870 (list entry:

England identify, however, that from the later 19<sup>th</sup> century, these structures were routinely added to earlier open yards and from 1880 are far more common. At Asterleigh Farm, the covered yard exhibits some features in common with other examples but it is not part of that early period of technological innovation associated with the 1850-70 period, it is not part of a deliberately planned model farm but a later adaptation. It is of some historic interest in illustrating the adoption of up to date farming practice at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century at Asterleigh Farm. It also has some architectural interest, particularly in the large (now blocked) arched opening to the south, which is seen on many other examples, the louvered clerestory that illustrates technological requirements for good ventilation and the bar tension trusses, providing a large internal span in conjunction with a more traditional timber post structure of the aisles.

**4.14** By this time, however, this structure is probably one of a relatively common type. It does not retain any internal features such as feed or water troughs. It has also eroded and infilled one of the earlier yards that formed the historic loose courtyard arrangement of the farmstead, particularly altering the degree to which the 18<sup>th</sup> century threshing barn can be seen and understood. Though this does not negate its own innate interest and contribution to historic values of the listed building and site, it does somewhat compromise the legibility of the older barn and its architectural qualities.

---

1156480), a second was constructed bespoke as part of the model home farm at the Shirburn Estate, south Oxfordshire (list entry: 1368850) . The Yard was constructed in 1856-7. Though a detailed analysis has not been carried out those entries consulted are overwhelmingly of the middle years of the 19th century and part of a planned farmstead of that era, rather than a later adaptation.



*Figure 44: An example of a listed covered yard, Grade II\* listed covered yard, mid-19<sup>th</sup> century Apley Park, Shropshire (Historic England © Mike Williams) included in Historic England's summary of National Farm Building Types, 2013*

- 4.15** The even later structures added to the farm in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century are of no innate architectural interest and limited historic interest in relation to the setting of the listed building. Though they show the ongoing use of the farm, they illustrate modern practices not the agricultural practices associated and contemporary with the farmhouse. They are all larger than the historic buildings, in terms of footprint, they are constructed of standardised elements and mass produced materials and cladding. Those buildings to the north of the historic farmyard are also on slightly higher ground and are somewhat visually dominant, particularly from the north and west.
- 4.16** The historic farm buildings of the later 18<sup>th</sup> century through the 19<sup>th</sup> century form a positive group around the farmhouse, and when considered as part of the extent of that listing contribute to its significance as illustrating past farming techniques, the various functional requirements of buildings and spaces on a mixed farm, and have some architectural and material qualities in their local materials which is in common with the listed building.
- 4.17** Later changes reflect investment in the farm, reinforcing historic interest of the farmhouse which continued through the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century to be the domestic focus associated with the working buildings, and new trends in farming practice. The roofs of all the older buildings, including the farmhouse, were all

upgraded to grey slate, most probably after the railway lines were installed enabling easy transport of these materials. These changes reflect the historic development of the farm. They contribute to historic values associated with the farmhouse.

## Contribution of setting

- 4.18** The farmhouse and farm buildings are still situated within a rural setting surrounded by fields and woodland areas. The rural surroundings are palpable in views past, around and out from the historic farmhouse and associated practical buildings. There is a close sense of continuity between the existing setting and that indicated in historic maps as having existed in the past. The early 19<sup>th</sup> century maps suggest that there was more woodland to the north, and the current setting has changed with larger modern buildings added to the north and east, but otherwise there is a very low degree of change. Even these later buildings are agricultural and continue the legibility of this compact group. This rural surroundings is an intrinsic part of the building's interest as an isolated farmhouse and farmstead.
- 4.19** There is a similarly strong sense of historic continuity with the approach from the east which retains much of its historic route, though the approach to the north of the historic farm buildings is a more recent addition to the historic route, which approached the farmhouse from the south.
- 4.20** The Scheduled monument is discussed in more detail in the DAS from RPS but provides an important aspect of the setting of the farm to the north west, giving a depth of evidence to human activity in this area over time.