

HERITAGE STATEMENT & HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT.

BIBURY TROUT FARM

BIBURY

CIRENCESTER

GLOUCESTERSHIRE

PROPOSED ROOF COVER OVER ACTIVITY AREA

Background

Bibury is located between Cirencester and Burford. It is one of the most visited villages in the shole of the Cotswolds and particularly famous for the small terrace of cottages known as Arlington Row – now owned by the National Trust. Bibury lies at the point when the former main road between Bristol and Banbury crossed the River Colne, which flows south in a steep-sided valley to join the River Thames.

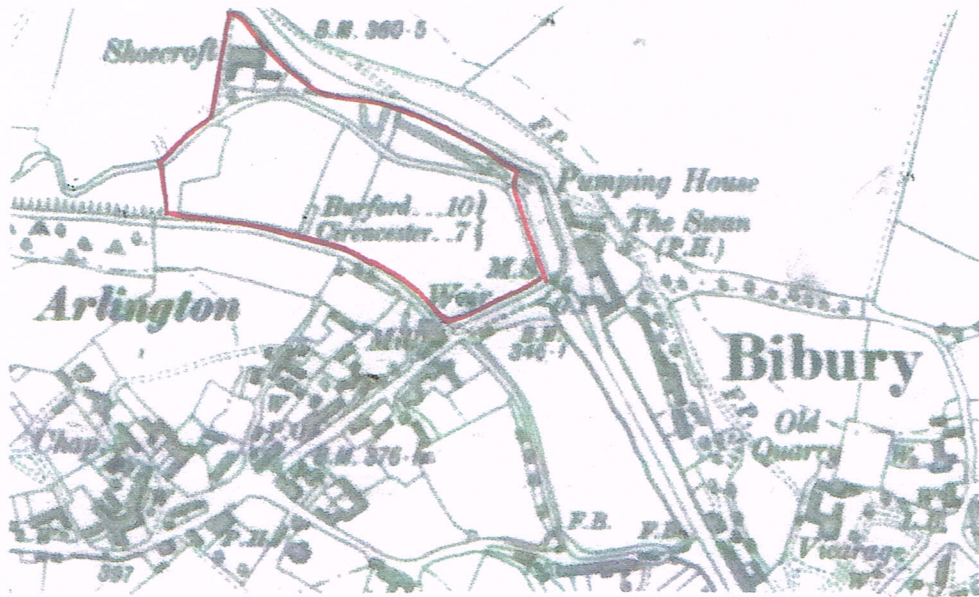
Just over a mile downstream of the village the river is crossed by the line of a major Roman cross-country road – the Akeman Street, and there is a Roman villa site in the village itself. On the downs to the north-west of the village, is the ancient Salt Way – a possibly prehistoric ridgeway and certainly an important path in the Saxon period.

The predominant industry up until the later-20th century was agriculture, which is still important though with mechanisation and specialisation, requires fewer workers. The River Colne provided good quality fishing as well as reliable waterpower for a local woollen industry based on the local flocks.

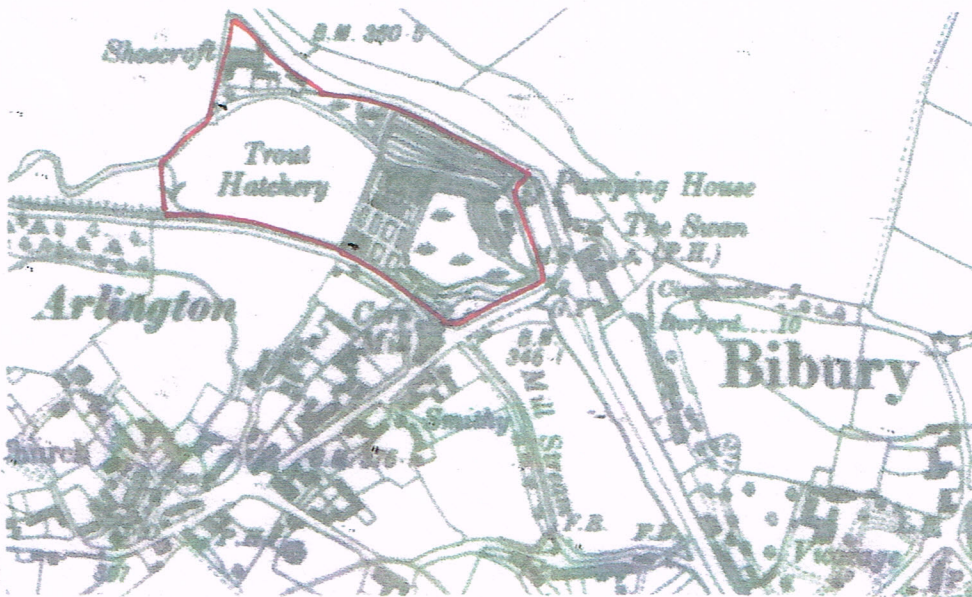
The river would have provided power for the fulling process rather than for weaving – which would have been done by hand.

The main industry for some time has been tourism, with Bibury and particularly Arlington, being major tourist attractions. The village was already a minor attraction for visitors in the 18th century. Pope wrote “The pleasing prospect of Bibury” in 1728 and in 1785 the generally difficult to please traveller and diarist John Byng stayed in the “neatest, civilest inn that can be found” at Bibury, which was also “an excellent station for a trout fishery”.

It became much better known in the later – 19th century – despite being nowhere near a railway station, William Morris claimed that it was “surely the most beautiful village in England” Arthur Gibbs wrote an influential book - A Cotswold Village – based on his knowledge of the Coln valley, and paintings of Arlington Row began to appear. The development of motor transport in the 20th century has led to massive increases in visitor numbers.



In the 1903 edition of the Ordnance Survey the Trout farm was not yet established



By the time the 1924 Maps were created the newly created Trout Hatchery and ponds can clearly be seen, although the current visitor centre was not yet built.

Bibury Trout Farm falls within the Bibury Conservation Area first designated in November 1971 and subsequently amended in 1990 and again in 1998. The designation describes the character of Bibury as a residential Cotswold village, but refers to the trout farm as “an exception to this, however, mostly out of sight.” It is also referred to as, not within Bibury proper and that its influence on the character of the conservation area, is the setting of the nearby Arlington Mill.

Bibury Trout Farm

The farm is located to the north of the Bibury-Arlington Bridge.

On the OS 25inch England and Wales, 1884 map there are a series of channels and ponds to the East of site. Whilst records from the Bibury Trout Farm note it was founded in 1902. At the time it appears that the farm must have been of a small scale as only small ponds can be seen to the East of the site and on the 1903 six-inch edition of the Ordnance Survey.

A Trout Hatchery is labelled and can be seen on OS Six Map that was published in 1924.

There is a record at Gloucestershire Archives showing that changes were made to the entrance and reception building by Eric Cole Architects in the 1970's. The offices appear to have been built in 1984.

The building was constructed of local palette or stone and stone tiles. Internally there is a generous double height space but a somewhat visually exposed convoluted timber structure. End gables are glazed and there are large elements of patent glazing. The building has little architectural merit.

There are several additional structures which are attached to the building which appear to have been added to service current visitor and farm needs. Single storey extensions, white tents on decks etc. There are also a number of other buildings built within the farm over the years all ancillary to the farm as a business or as a tourist attraction.

The following are listed buildings in close proximity to the Trout Farm.

250m to the North West of the farm visitor centre and within the farm adjacent to the road towards Ablington there is a stone barn – Shoecroft Barn which predates the ponds and other buildings on the farm.

This is Grade II Listed List Entry Number 1154858 See Appendix A for listing

15m to the South West of the farm visitor centre on the far side of the River Colne is Arlington Mill.

This is Grade II Listed List Entry Number 1303546 See Appendix B for listing

100m to the East of the farm visitor centre is The Swan Hotel.

This is Grade II Listed List Entry Number 1088416 See Appendix C for listing

Significance & Setting

The trout farm has been in this location for over 100 years and it sits in a most prominent location within one of the most visited locations in the Cotswolds. Coaches arrive opposite the farm and it is therefore one of the first features of Bibury that will be seen by a tourist. It is also apparent from the main road giving drivers a transient view of it.

The significance of the site as a tourist destination is an important characteristic and is key to understanding how Bibury / Arlington have evolved over the last two centuries.

The farm as a whole, needs to be understood as an historic form of agriculture being one of the oldest fish farms in the country.

Due to the longevity of the farm and its visitor centre it is a key characteristic of the whole setting of Bibury and Arlington and are part of the local identity.

Arlington Mill, has been converted to residential use for holiday lets, it was previously a museum. It is near the fish farm with its northern gable facing it. The key characteristic of this elevation is a prominent raked buttress. It is a large building in height and scale and has a natural dominance over the farm visitor centre but the proposed new building is on the northern boundary of the farm some distance away.

The Swan Hotel, whilst close is visually separated by its own and the farms gardens and trees. There is little visual connection between it and the farm. There is a connection through the function of serving tourists but the location of the new building is on the Arlington Road and does not relate to the hotel.

Shoecroft Barn is situated further along the northern boundary of the farm adjacent to the Ablington Road, some distance from the application site. The barn is currently used as an office and general storage building in association with the fish farm.

Proposal Impact

The location of the proposed roof cover over the children's activity area is on the northern boundary of the trout farm, adjacent to the Ablington Road. The location of the proposal is currently the fish hatchery area. The nature of the farming business has changed and the hatchery is no longer required. The area is currently a concrete apron area with 33 no metal open water tanks of varying sizes linked together with metal pipework. It is proposed to remove the tanks and associated pipework leaving the concrete apron as an open area. As part of the ongoing proposals to improve the facilities available to visitors and to provide activities for whole family it is proposed to utilise the area for younger children as an arts, activities and education area. The proposal is to facilitate group and school visits as well as adding to family activities. Whilst this will be an outdoor area the proposal is to provide a cover over part of it to provide an all-weather facility. The proposal is therefore a roof only structure on timber posts and open sides, attached to an existing building constructed in recon stone in the 1960's and currently housing pumping plant.

Conclusion

The proposal will facilitate the removal of the metal water tanks and pipework and general aesthetic improvements to this part of the farm, replacing them with the roof covered area constructed in natural materials more suited to its surroundings.

The conservation area designation concludes that the trout farm is mostly out of sight of the conservation area as a whole and that any potential problem that would affect the conservation area would be the area in the south west corner, that forms the setting of Arlington Mill.

Given that the proposed location of the new covered area is on the other side of the farm, well away and out of sight from the Mill. It is concluded that the proposal would no adversely effect on the conservation area as a whole and would constitute a visual improvement to this part of the trout farm.

Appendix A:

BIBURY - SP 1007-1107 10/3 Shoecroft Barn 23.1.52 II Former barn, now detached house. Dated 1769; mid-late C20 conversion. Random rubble limestone; stone slate roof. Five-bay barn with porch and outshuts to south; now 2-storey house. Central former porch on south side with glazing in door position; hipped porch roof. Upper part of outshut roofs removed to form balcony with access from inserted upper floor casements in main barn wall. Central barn doorway on north side, upper part with glazing inserted below original timber lintel. Datestone above doorway 'W.S. / 1769', for William Somerville, vicar, this being glebe land at that date. Two flanking slit vents; inserted upper floor casement with timber lintel to right. Two upper floor casements inserted at east end. Lean-to workshop addition at west end is not of special interest. Interior not inspected.

Listing NGR: SP1121607076

Appendix B

BIBURY A433, Arlington SP 1006-1106 (north side) 11/24 Arlington Mill and No 1, Arlington Mill Cottages (including cottages previously listed as abutting 23.1.52 Arlington Mill) II Formerly woollen and corn mills with 3 attached houses; now museum with one attached house. Late C17; additions of c1700, early and mid C19; major 1859 alterations to mill; restored 1966 by David Verey. Random rubble, coursed and ashlar limestone; ashlar and brick chimneys; stone slate roof. Main 3 and 4-storey mill block with 3 and 2-storey houses at south west end; 2-storey with attic mill cottage on south east side. South east (road) side: mill block to right with gable-mounted cut-down chimney to left. Scattered mostly C19 segmental arched casement fenestration. Two tall raking buttresses with coped tops and bold diagonal corner buttresses are part of mid C19 strengthening of structure. Segmental arched doorway with plank door and hipped roofed porch is approached up flight of stone steps. Projecting mill cottage attached below chimney gable to left has lean-to addition in angle on right side; scattered timber casement fenestration with timber lintels except for two upper floor 2-light recessed chamfered mullioned casements with hoodmoulds on south west side; C19 altered doorway below with 4-panel door; 2 eaves-mounted gabled roof dormers. Three-storey mill house to left has ashlar elevation with 2-window 3-light mullioned casement fenestration with hoodmoulds; no windows to upper floor. Further house to left has single-window 3-light mullioned casement fenestration with doorway to right having 6-panel door; single eaves-mounted dormer. South west end: half-hipped lean-to to end house. East end: tall gable end to mill with diagonal and off-centre offset buttresses. Rear: scattered fenestration to mill as to front. Various eaves-mounted and mid-pitch ashlar chimneys. Interior: iron columns and girders are from 1859 rebuilding to take steam-powered corn-milling machinery, since removed. Present mill machinery is from North Cerney. Other parts of building now used for the display of Victorian and Arts and Crafts exhibits. Recorded as a cloth and corn mill in C17, continuing in dual use until mid C19 concentration upon corn milling. C19 buttresses and position in village contribute to picturesque nature of building. (A.R.J. Jurica, 'Bibury' in V.C.H. Glos. vii, 1981, pp. 21-44; and D. Verey, Gloucestershire: The Cotswolds, 1979.)

Listing NGR: SP1136806848

Appendix C

BIBURY A433 SP 1006-1106 (east side) 11/4 Swan Hotel 23.1.52 GV II Former coaching inn, now hotel. Mid-late C18; extensive early C19 additions; c1930 enlargement. Coursed and dressed limestone; ashlar chimneys; stone slate roof, Welsh slate to former stable wing. Two-storey T-plan block to rear of long 2-storey front range; stable wing to south; 2-storey with attic enlargement to north. Front: 4-window fenestration to early C19 right part of frontage, all 16-pane sashes with sunblind valencing except 12-pane sashes to central canted bay window; doorway to right. Three ridge-mounted chimneys with moulded caps. C20 block to left has 5-window 16-pane sash fenestration, flanked on upper floor by 2 keyed oval windows. Doorway with moulded architraves, glazed doors and bold shell hood below right oval window. Five hipped roofed attic dormers with small-paned casements. Parapet gable ends, part extended with lower gable at north end. South end: mixed mullioned fenestration to earlier building behind front range. Long 2-storey former stables and coach house now incorporated into hotel, with canted bay window in former coach doorway; timber casement fenestration. Row of iron ridge vents. Interior: mostly altered in C19. Recorded as an inn from 1672. Said to have been used for

manor courts - the village lock up (q.v.) being immediately to north of inn. Important view-closing position upon eastward passage through village. (Early photographs of inn before c1930 addition in NMR and displayed in bar area; A.R.J. Jurica, 'Bibury' in V.C.H. Glos. vii, 1981, pp 21-44)