Lower Farm
Basingstoke Road
Ramsdell
Hampshire
NGR: SU 591 562

A
Heritage Impact Assessment

Text
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Summary

Proposals have been made to demolish some redundant and derelict 20\textsuperscript{th} century farm buildings at Lower Farm, just to the south of Ramsdell, a village in north Hampshire, as well as the construction of a new house to replace one demolished around 1950. The surviving Barn and Granary are Grade II listed. The site is not within a conservation area and there are no other listed buildings or non-designated heritage assets within 500m or so of it. This report was commissioned to assess any potential impacts of the proposals on the listed buildings and on any other heritage assets. It concludes that there would be no adverse impact on the character, setting or significance of any designated or non-designated heritage assets. Instead, the proposals would enhance the setting and character of the Barn and Granary.

1. Introduction

Proposals have been made to demolish some 20\textsuperscript{th} century derelict and redundant mid-20\textsuperscript{th} century buildings on a yard forming part of Lower Farm, just to the south of Ramsdell in northern Hampshire and to build a new house to replace one demolished in about 1950. The surviving Barn and Granary are older than the other buildings and are Grade II listed.

In 2010 the then government replaced the existing Planning Policy Guidance Nos. 15 and 16 (PPG15 and PPG16) with a combined Planning Policy Statement No. 5 (PPS5). This reiterated the fact that it is the responsibility of owners to understand the value of each ‘heritage asset’ likely to be impacted by their proposals and to produce sufficient relevant information to inform the planning making process. Two years later, PPS5 was in turn replaced by a few paragraphs in the government’s National Planning Policy Framework.

This Consultancy was commissioned to undertake an outline heritage impact assessment of the proposals. The work was undertaken in October 2015 and is not concerned with any other planning issues.

1.1 Report Format

The report format is quite simple. After this brief introduction there is a short section of the requirements of NPPF (Section 2) and one on heritage impact assessments (Section 3). They are followed by an outline setting and history of the site (Section 4), a general Description (Section 5), an account of the buildings (Section 6) and a brief summary of the proposals (Section 7). Section 8 is the heritage impact assessment, Section 9 is a short conclusion and Section 10 a list of the references used in this report.
Fig. 1: Location Plan
(Ordnance Survey Open Data).
2. Planning Guidance

2.1 National Planning Policy Framework Guidelines

Government guidelines regarding the listed buildings and conservation areas legislation enshrined in the 1990 Planning Act have changed twice in two years. In March 2010 the long-lasting Planning Policy Guidelines Nos.15 and 16 (PPG15 and PPG16) – relating respectively to archaeology and buildings – were amalgamated into a new set of guidelines - Planning Policy Statement No.5 (PPS5).\(^1\) This introduced a new term in planning legislation – the ‘heritage asset’.

Parts of PPS5, much condensed, were incorporated and regurgitated into a new précis of planning guidance published in March 2012 – the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – which replaced all other separate Planning Policy Guidelines and Planning Policy Statements.\(^2\) The glossary of the NPPF described ‘heritage assets’ in the same way as PPS5:

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\text{‘A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).’}\]

Because of the condensed and generalised nature of the NPPF there has been considerable confusion as to the guidance within it, but in essence, excepting the over-arching concept of presumption in favour of ‘sustainable development’, the heritage aspects have changed little.

Much of the existing advice outlined in the earlier guidelines is still deemed to be of relevance and this is summarised best in a guidance note to planning inspectors issued by the Planning Inspectorate, which states that ‘The Framework [i.e. the NPPF] largely carries forward existing planning policies and protections in a significantly more streamlined and accessible form’.\(^3\) The main relevant paragraph in the NPPF (largely based on policies HE6-HE8 of PPS5) states that local planning authorities should require applicants:

\[
\text{‘...to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposals on their significance’.}\]

The National Planning Policy Framework, as a general rule, recommends approval of development unless ‘any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits’.\(^4\)

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\(^1\) Department for Communities & Local Government, 2010, Planning Policy Statement No.5: Planning for the Historic Environment


\(^3\) The Planning Inspectorate, 2012, Advice Produced by the Planning Inspectorate for use by Inspectors

\(^4\) Ibid.

\(^5\) NPPF, para. 14
3. Heritage Impact Assessments

3.1 General Introduction

The purpose of a heritage impact assessment (HIA) is to meet the relevant guidance given in the NPPF. This outlines the need to inform the planning decisions when considering proposals that have the potential to have some impact on the character or setting of a heritage asset. It is not concerned with other planning issues.

The nature of the heritage assets and the potential impact upon them through development are both very varied. The heritage assets include both designated heritage assets – such as listed buildings, scheduled ancient monuments and conservation area – and non-designated heritage assets, a rather uncomfortable and sometimes subjective category that includes locally listed buildings, field systems and views.

The degree of impact a proposed development could have on such assets is variable and can sometimes be positive rather than negative. The wide range of possible impacts can include loss of historic fabric, loss of historic character, damage to historic setting, and damage to significant views.

Under the requirements of the NPPF and of other useful relevant guidance, such as English Heritage’s Conservation Principles and Informed Conservation, and recent material from the newly formed Historic England, it is necessary to assess the significance of the designated and non-designated heritage assets involved, to understand the nature and extent of the proposed developments, and then to make an objective judgement on the impact that the proposals may have.6

This report is designed, under the guidance of the NPPF, to assess whether the proposed development will have any impact on the conservation area and the setting of the other heritage assets and, if so, the degree of such impact. In particular, it is designed to test whether or not any would suffer undue harm to the setting of these heritage assets as outlined in the NPPF.

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3.2 Definition of Setting

Setting, as a concept, was clearly defined in PPS5 and in its accompanying Guidance notes and was then restated in the NPPF which describe it as:

'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.'

The latest Historic England guidance on what constitutes setting is virtually identical to the English Heritage guidance it superseded in March 2015:

'Setting is not a heritage asset, nor a heritage designation, though land within a setting may itself be designated (see Designed settings below). Its importance lies in what it contributes to the significance of the heritage asset. This depends on a wide range of physical elements within, as well as perceptual and associational attributes pertaining to, the heritage asset's surroundings.'

The new Historic England guidance also re-states the earlier guidance that setting is not confined entirely to visible elements and views but includes other aspects including environmental considerations and historical relationships between assets:

'The contribution of setting to the significance of a heritage asset is often expressed by reference to views, a purely visual impression of an asset or place which can be static or dynamic, including a variety of views of, across, or including that asset, and views of the surroundings from or through the asset, and may intersect with, and incorporate the settings of numerous heritage assets.'

3.3 Definition of Significance

In the glossary of the new Planning Practice Guidance to the NPPF, significance is defined as:

'The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting'.

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1 Historic England, 2015, The Setting of Heritage Assets: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: 3, para.4
2 Ibid., para.6

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3.4 Definition of Harm

The manner in which the significance of a heritage asset could be harmed was summarised in the case of Bedford Borough Council v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, [2012] EWHC 4344 (Admin) (also known as Podington):

‘Significance may be harmed through alteration of the asset, i.e. physical harm, or development within its setting, i.e. non-physical or indirect harm. Significance may be lost through destruction of the asset, or, in a very extreme case, development within its setting’.

The NPPF and its accompanying Planning Practice Guidance effectively distinguish between two degrees of harm to heritage assets – substantial and less than substantial. Substantial harm is considered to be a degree of harm so serious to the significance of the heritage asset, usually involving total or partial destruction of a listed building, for example.

As the term suggests, less than substantial harm is not as serious and varies in its impact – but it still is an important consideration in assessing planning applications. In the Podington case the issue related to the impact on the setting of heritage assets and it was concluded that:

‘In the context of non-physical or indirect harm, the yardstick was effectively the same. One was looking for an impact which would have such a serious impact on the significance of the asset that its significance was either vitiating altogether or very much reduced’.
4. Setting & Outline History

4.1 Ramsdell

Lower Farm lies to the south of the small north Hampshire village of Ramsdell, sometimes also spelt Ramsdale; the name is first recorded as Ramesdela in 1170 and is probably derived from the Old English hramsa dell - possibly meaning ‘wild garlic valley’ or just ‘ram’s valley’.

The village was, anciently, a tithing in the northern part of the extensive and scattered parish of Wooton St. Lawrence until it became ecclesiastically independent in 1868; the name of that parish - derived from the Old English for ‘the ‘tun’ or settlement in or by the wood’ probably gives some indication of its early medieval character.

The area is within the gently rolling downlands between Basingstoke and Newbury, an area of loamy soils over a chalk subsoil. It is a landscape of clay and heathland included in the Thames Basin Heaths National Character Area.

The typically scattered settlement pattern of isolated farms and hamlets represents different development issues - from piecemeal medieval assarting through to the late inclosures of heathland only brought into mainstream production due to improved techniques as late as the early-19th century.

It is rich in much earlier history. To the north-east is the once important settlement of Calleva Atrebatum an important tribal centre that, in the 1st century AD, evolved into a major Roman city to the north of the modern village of Silchester. Several Roman roads radiate from the site of the city, including the Portway which passes close to Ramsdell; there is also a Roman villa site about 1km to the south-west of Lower Farm.

For most of its history the village appears to have been a quiet agricultural backwater, though it may well have been caught up in the various battles and seiges in this area during the English Civil War of the 1640’s.

The remaining open fields were inclosed in 1832 following the passing of a private Act three years before hand. By the second half of the 19th century the principal owner of land was Sir Edward Bates of Manydown Park and the living of the new parish was in the gift of the Bishop of Winchester. The population at this time was around 500.

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Fig. 2: Extract from Milne’s 1759 map of Hampshire.

Fig. 3: Extract from the original Ordnance Survey drawings of 1808 (British Library).

Fig. 4: Extract from the 1st edition 1" Ordnance Survey map of 1817.
Fig.4: Extract from the 1st edition 1:2500 Ordnance Survey map of the 1870's.

4.2 Lower Farm

The farm lies to the south of Ramsdell, close to the meeting of four small lanes or tracks and next to a diminutive stream flowing northwards. Taylor's map of Hampshire published in 1759 doesn't show the farm but is of limited accuracy and small scale (see Fig.2). There is a cluster of buildings shown in the position of Lower Farm on Milne's 1791 map and, interestingly, as on the Taylor map, the name 'Ramsdell' is applied to this group and, separately, to what is now the centre of the village.

On the original Ordnance Survey drawing of the area begun in 1807 and the 1st edition Ordnance Survey 1" map it is labelled Ramsdell Farm and seems to have incorporated buildings on both sides of the main lane.

The more detailed 1st edition of the 1:2500 Ordnance Survey map, surveyed in the 1870's, shows what was clearly a substantial farmhouse, set in its own grounds, just to the south of this part of the farmstead; the main foldyard appears to have been to the north, so that the present Barn would have been on its eastern side. There was a less formal yard to the east of the Barn – which is shown as already having the lean-tos on the west side.

By the time the 3rd edition of the 1:2500 OS map was published in 1911 there had been more developments on the southern side of the yard to the east of the Barn but the main phase of redevelopment came later in the century – which also saw the demolition of the farmhouse which had gone by the time of the 1969 edition of the 1:2500 Ordnance survey map.
Fig. 6: General development of Lower Farm on 6" OS mapping from 1897 to 1971.
Pl. 1: General view of Lower Farm from the south.

Pl. 2: The farm from the north.
5. General Description

The earlier loose courtyard layout of the farmstead shown on Ordnance Survey mapping until the 1930's was effectively lost after the Second World War. The farm lost its key element - the farmhouse - on the south side of the original farmyard and, although the Barn on the east side survives and a new portal framed shelter shed has been built against the road on the west side to replace an earlier structure, there is now no longer any building along the north side of the former yard.

Most of the buildings are now situated to the east of the Barn, in what had been an open area. This is now infilled with a series of mid-late 20th century agricultural buildings of little or no historical significance, several of which are beyond economic repair and all of which appear to have very limited usefulness. There is no real pattern within the buildings and the hardstanding and boundaries have no real coherence.

Pl.3: General view of the eastern part of the farmstead.
6. The Buildings

Most of the buildings on the farm date to the second half of the 20th century, are mostly in poor condition, and of little aesthetic, architectural or historical value. There are two exceptions - the Barn and the Granary - whose setting is compromised by the later structures.

Fig.5: Outline plan of the farmstead showing the locations of the Tithe Barn and Granary – as well as the other buildings. Those to be demolished are depicted in red.

Pl.4: The farmstead, looking west.
6.1 Building A: The Barn

6.1.1 Description

6.1.1.01 The Exterior

The Grade II listed Barn is aligned roughly north-south and set back from the road. The building is a four bay timber-framed structure faced mainly in horizontal weatherboarding – a relatively recent replacement for earlier, and possibly primary, weatherboarding. Below the northern truss the gable elevation is covered in corrugated iron sheeting instead.

Three of the bays are roughly the same length – a little over 4m – apart from the northernmost bay which is just under 3.5m long. The framing is quite simple in design and made up, apart from the bay posts, fairly thin scantling timbers.

The timbers appear to be pit-sawn and the jointing is of simple fully shouldered single or double pegged mortise and tenons. There are some exposed plain knife-cut carpenters marks. The framing sits on a plinth of hand-made red bricks laid in lime-rich mortar mainly to a simple English Bond; the south gable plinth has been rebuilt.

The side frames were probably originally mirror imaged, although the southernmost frame on the west elevation has been replaced in breeze block. The second bay from the south was clearly the site of the threshing floor and has tall and almost full bay-width double doorways.

The bay posts flanking this bay appear to have been reused from elsewhere, one at least being a former beam; they lack the gunstock jowled heads of the other main posts. The present doors in the eastern opening are of ledged-and-braced plank construction, strap hung.

The side frames are two tall panels high; the ones to the north and south of the threshing floor doorways being four panels wide – the northern ones with a mid-rail interrupted by a full height stud, the southern ones with no such stud and a continuous mid-rail instead; the shorter northernmost bays have that same continuous mid-rail.

The surviving southern bay on the east side has straight braces from the posts to the wall-plates. Other bays just have one such brace from the northern bay posts. There are mortises for up-braces in the wall-plate above the eastern doorway opening but an answering mortise only in the northern bay post. The door jambs of the doorway openings seem to have been altered but it is clear that the bay posts did not act as jambs in an earlier phase.

The northern gable frame survives more or less intact. Beneath the truss it is two panels high, matching the side frames, and four panels wide. There are straight braces from the corner posts to the truss tie. The southern gable frame has been rebuilt in studwork.

The ephemeral cross frames consist only of the bay posts and the roof trusses; there are, or in some cases, have been, straight braces from the posts to the truss ties. Some of the braces have been removed and some have been replaced quite crudely by alternately positioned braces.
Pl.5: The Barn (Building A) from the south-west.

Pl.6: The east elevation of the Barn.
Pl.5: The Barn (Building A) from the south-west.

Pl.6: The east elevation of the Barn.
The panels of the timber-framing were clearly never infilled with wattle-and-daub or with brick nogging. Instead it appears that the barn was designed to be weatherboarding. In the southern bay of the eastern side frame and in the north gable frame there are thin surviving vertical timbers nailed into position between the jointed studs. In other frames there are scars where such timbers probably once were. These gave an additional rigidity to the weatherboarding nailed to the external faces of the framing.

There is an inserted doorway at the southern end of the east side of the Barn and another towards the eastern end of the north gable. In addition the framing of the southern bay on the west side has been replaced in concrete blockwork contemporary with the added lean-to projecting from the wall; this incorporates a doorway and a borrowed light window. The former doorway on the west side of the threshing floor has been removed and the resulting gap links the main part of the barn and the southern lean-to.

The southern lean-to on the west side of the Barn is of later-20th century date with a faced mainly in corrugated iron sheeting, apart from on the south gable which is weather-boarded - the boarding being contemporary with the newer weather-boarding on the rebuilt south gable of the main section of the Barn.

The northern section of the lean-to is wider than the southern section but shares the same lean-to roof profile. It is open fronted but has sheeting on its northern end. Neither lean-to is of any antiquity but there is clear map evidence to show that there were lean-tos on the whole length of this side of the Barn by the later-19th century.

There is evidence on the eastern side of the Barn for a former projection - presumably a lean-to - against the northern end of the elevation. This is in the form of an otherwise meaningless timber plate fixed to the Barn a little below its wall-plate. A projection is indicated in this position on early-20th century maps.

6.1.1.02 The Roof

The roof is structurally integrated with the timber-framing and so of four bays as well. It is steeply pitched and was presumably once thatched. It originally ended in a half hip at the northern end, the structure of which survives in the roof timbers despite the end being altered to a plain gable. The southern end was rebuilt as a plain gable along with the wall below but was presumably originally half-hipped as well.

The hip truss at the northern end consists of the half principal rafters which are linked by a collar. There are five struts rising up from the tie beam in a slightly fanned formation – the central king strut vertical, those to either side very slightly angled; this is more to do with indifferent carpentry than being a very faint echo of the earlier ‘fan’ or ‘butterfly’ trusses used in this area in earlier centuries. The three central struts rise to the collar, those to either side to the principal rafter. The other roof trusses consist solely of tie-beams, principal rafters and the collars.

The roof supports a single tier of clasped purlins and many, if not all, of the common rafters could be original; these meet at bridle joints at the apex. The roof covering is now corrugated iron sheeting, probably of early-mid 20th century date.

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6.1.1.03 The Interior

The interior of the main part of the Barn is, and presumably always was, a single open space and was designed as such though the original floor has been lost and stored material within makes a more thorough assessment difficult.

6.1.2 Discussion

The building was clearly built as a four bay threshing barn, and for hand-threshing. The threshing floor was in the second bay from the south and typically had broad and full height cart doors to either side to facilitate getting wagons into the building, as well as light and draughts for the processing carried out within. The other bays would have been for the storage of the crop to be processed.

The construction techniques, the scantling of the timber used in the structure and the use of weather-boarding would suggest a date fairly late in the timber-framed tradition, no earlier than the mid-18th century.

It seems quite likely that it was one of many barns erected during the Napoleonic Wars of the late-18th and early-19th centuries, during which the blockade of imports of grain from the continent led to rising prices in Britain and more prosperity for producers of home grown produce. That in turn led to an increase in the acreage set to arable, and corn in particular, and an associated need for more barns to process the increased harvests.

The building has been altered and extended but the basic form and most of the framing survives. It is considered to form a group with the adjacent and possibly contemporary Granary (Building B) and to be a building that is worthy of its Grade II listed status - indicating a building of national, rather than just local, significance.

Pl.7: The interior of the Barn, looking north.

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6.2 Building B: The Granary

6.2.1 Description

6.2.1.01 The Exterior

The Grade II listed Granary is a small two-bay timber-framed and weather-boarded structure, roughly square in plan, situated to the south of the Barn. The framing is raised up on saddle stones; the corner and bay ones are of the two-part 'mushroom' type – as are the central ones in each end elevation.

These saddle stones support the ends of the main axial beam of the floor structure, which is a single timber supported mid-way by a single tapering saddle stone with flat sides. The floor joists are tenoned into this axial beam and the side sole plates; there is no sole plate for the cross frame.

The main framing of the superstructure is little more than braced studwork, but the main components are properly mortised and tenoned. The corner posts have simple gunstock jowls.

There are straight down-braces from the corner posts to the sole plates of the side elevations, and shorter straight up-braces from the central bay post to the wall-plates. In addition, the intermediate cross frame consists of the jowled bay posts, from which straight up-braces rise to the tie-beam of the truss.

The entrance into the Granary is through a primary central doorway in the south elevation. Above the doorway is a two-light window opening partly blocked by the latest weatherboarding. This is a timber casement with an external rebate in the fixed light for glazing. There is another two light window in the north gable.

6.2.1.02 The Roof

The roof is structurally contiguous with the framing, steeply pitched and plain gabled; it was presumably originally thatched but is now covered in corrugated iron sheeting. The end gable trusses seem to have been partially rebuilt and it is possible that the roof could have ended in half hips, like the Barn. Full access was not possible because the state of the loft floor.

The intermediate truss is original and consists simply of tie-beam, principal rafters and a pair of widely spaced struts. There is a single tier of clasped purlins; the common rafters are pegged to the purlins and meet at a thin ridge board.
Pl.8: The Granary (Building B) from the south-west with the Barn to the left.

Pl.9: The Granary from the north-east.
6.2.1.03 The Interior

The ground floor has three open boarded storage bins on either side of an axial passageway access by the main entrance. The bins are partly covered in a zinc-like metal sheet and could be original.

The structure of the loft floor is a little unusual. It is based on a pair of thin-scantling axial beams between the tie-beams of the trusses. The common joist are slotted over them and, at the side frames, lapped onto additional thin timbers placed on top of the structural wall plates. There is what appears a primary, and properly jointed, trimmer in the floor structure for a trap access to the loft.

The loft level was only accessed from below due to the condition of the floor. It was also clearly used for grain storage and the sides of the central truss below the 'V-struts' are boarded.

6.2.2 Discussion

The Granary is quite similar to the Barn in terms of its construction and is probably more or less a contemporary building of the late-18th or early-19th century. It was clearly designed as a free-standing granary.

Its superstructure is typically set up on staddle stones to help combat the threat of rats and other rodents - as well as to improve ventilation and to prevent dampness. Many free standing granaries were positioned close to the farmhouse, for security reasons - as this one originally was.

It seems to have been little altered, about from some replacement of weather-boarding and the replacement in corrugated iron sheeting of what was probably originally a thatched roof covering.

The windows in the gable ends have been partly encroached but the original doorway survives. The interior bins may also be primary features of the building; the slightly unusual upper floor structure is original, as is the trap door through it.

The building is thus a fairly well-preserved exemplar of its date and time and forms part of a small group with the adjacent and possibly contemporary Granary (Building B). It is a building that is worthy of its Grade II listed status - indicating a building of national, rather than just local, significance.
Pl.10: The interior of the Granary, looking east.

Pl.11: Bracing from one of the bay posts.
6.3 The Other Buildings

None of the other buildings are of any historical or architectural significance and there is little of importance in their grouping. By the lane to the west is the four-bay West Shelter Shed (Building C), open on the east side to what was once the farmyard; it has a gabled roof and is a single-storey structure aligned parallel to the road.

Immediately to the east of the Barn is a modern four-bay concrete portal framed Dutch Barn (Building D) with corrugated iron sheeting for the plain gabled roof and parts of the sides. It is presumably of later-20th century date and probably contemporary with - and by the same manufacturer as, the West Shelter Shed.

The largest structure on the farm forms its eastern boundary and is the large gable roof East Shed (Building E) aligned north-south, probably dating from the third quarter of the 20th century. To the south is the much smaller block-work Concrete Shed (Building F) on the same alignment under a corrugated sheet roof; it is derelict and could not be accessed for safety issues.

Just to the north of the Granary is a pair of derelict and partly collapsed buildings with gabled roofs. The western one is the five bay South Shelter Shed (Building H) open on the west side and faced in corrugated iron sheeting on the others. The parallel South Shed (Building I) is presumably of ephemeral studwork and covered in weather-boarding - but again with a roof of corrugated iron sheets. Immediately to the north of, and built at right-angles to, this pair is a timber Lean-to (Building G) faced and roofed in corrugated sheeting.

Pl.12: The West Shelter Shed (Building C) and yard wall from the east.
Pl.13: The farm yard looking east, with buildings identified.

Pl.14: The southern side of the farmyard.
7. The Proposals

The proposals are to demolish most of the mid-20th century buildings, retaining only the West Shelter Shed (Building C) close to the road. The Barn and the Granary are to be retained. A new double pile square plan two storey traditionally designed house is to be sited to the east of the Barn and new simply designed outbuildings and garage are also proposed.

Pl.6: The proposed layout of the farm after the demolition of the mid-20th century structures and the construction of the replacement house and its outbuildings.
8. Heritage Impact Assessment

Lower Farm is a fairly isolated site well away from the main centre of the village of Ramsdell and also removed from any designated or non-designated heritage assets. However, as outlined in this report, it is considered that both the Barn and the Granary are Grade II listed buildings.

It is considered that the impact of the proposals are largely confined to the buildings within the farmstead itself rather than on the surrounding landscape or and heritage assets within the vicinity.

8.1 Demolition of the mid-20th Century Buildings

None of the buildings due to be demolished are considered individually to be of any intrinsic architectural or historical merit or, as a collection of agricultural structures, to have any significant group value.

In addition, whilst they are part of the later-20th century setting of the much earlier Barn and the Granary, they do not enhance the setting of either of those Grade II listed buildings and their loss will have little or no impact on the significance of those two more important structures.

As a result it is not considered that the demolition of these buildings will result in any harm to the character, setting or significance of the Barn and the Granary - and, instead, will enhance their setting.

8.2 Construction of the New House

The new house is to be built in a traditional style, positioned to the east of the Barn, partly on the footprint of the Dutch barn. This is not the same positioned as the farmhouse demolished in the mid-20th century, which was to the south-west of the Barn.

However, it is considered that the construction of the new dwelling will enhance the setting of the Barn and Granary. The main reasons for this assessment relate to the fact that the two buildings were clearly designed to be part of a reasonably prosperous and fairly large courtyard based farmstead, as indicated by the map regression.

Since the mid-20th century and the loss of the farmhouse, the farmstead has become a rather utilitarian and undistinguished collection of agricultural buildings devoid of the focal point provided by the farmhouse.

In effect it became little more than an outfarm and the presence of a threshing barn and a freestanding granary – with their valuable contents – on such an uninhabited farmstead in an isolated site would have been highly unusual.
The proposed new dwelling and its simply designed outbuildings, built to a loose courtyard plan, reinstates some of the concept of an historic farmstead more in keeping with the Barn and Granary, the setting of which will be enhanced as a result. These two buildings will form key elements in the rearranged site more in keeping with their original status.

Clearly the precise historical plan form of Lower Farm will not be recreated but in one sense this is seen as being a better option than creating a facsimile or pastiche of the past arrangements.

8.3 Archaeological Issues

There are no known buried archaeological features within the study area or immediately adjacent to it. The site of the proposed house and its outbuildings are on ground already disturbed and levelled as part of the re-ordering of the farmyard in the mid-20th century and it is considered that the archaeological potential is fairly low.

9. Conclusions

For the reasons outlined above, it is considered that the proposal will have no harmful impact in heritage terms. It is considered that these proposals will significantly enhance the setting of the two Grade II listed buildings – the Barn and the Granary – within the development site, as well as obviously improving their appearance and ensuring their long term futures.

There are no other listed buildings or non-designated heritage assets in the immediate vicinity of the site that could be affected by the changes – and even if there were the only impact would be a change in their views of the site; change, as outlined in current guidance, does not necessarily equate to harm.
10. References


Department for Communities & Local Government, 2010, Planning Policy Statement No.5: Planning for the Historic Environment

Department for Communities & Local Government, 2012, National Planning Policy Framework

Directories, various


The Planning Inspectorate, 2012, Advice Produced by the Planning Inspectorate for use by Inspectors
The Consultancy

Richard K Morriss founded this Consultancy in 1995 after previously working for English Heritage and the Ironbridge Institute of the University of Birmingham and spending eight years as Assistant Director of the Hereford Archaeology Unit. Although Shropshire-based the Consultancy works throughout the UK on a wide variety of historic buildings for clients that include the National Trust, the Landmark Trust, English Heritage, the Crown Estates, owners, architects, planning consultants and developers. It specialises in the archaeological and architectural analysis of historic buildings of all periods and planning advice related to them. It also undertakes broader area appraisals and Conservation Plans.

Richard Morriss is a former Member of the Institute of Field Archaeologists, a Member of the Association of Diocesan and Cathedral Archaeologists, archaeological advisor to four cathedrals, occasional lecturer at Bristol and Birmingham universities, and author of many academic papers and of 20 books, mainly on architecture and archaeology, including The Archaeology of Buildings (Tempus 2000), The Archaeology of Railways (Tempus 1999); Roads: Archaeology & Architecture (Tempus 2006) and ten in the Buildings of series: Bath, Chester, Ludlow, Salisbury, Shrewsbury, Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwick, Winchester, Windsor, Worcester (Sutton 1993-1994). He was a member of the project team responsible for the restoration of Astley Castle, Warwickshire, winner of the 2013 RIBA Stirling Prize.
Design & Access Statement

Lower Farm

Site & Location

Lower Farm, Basingstoke Road, Ramsdell, Tadley, RG26 5RD.

The farm is located on the East side of Basingstoke Road 1 mile from the A339 to the South and ¼ mile from Ramsdell to the North. Approximately 3.5 miles North West from the outskirts of Basingstoke.

The site sits just outside the AONB area which is located to the West side of the Basingstoke Road.

The area is rural in character with rolling open downs, mature woodland with scattered houses and settlements.

The site is 0.43 Ha and comprises the building in the farmstead and a paddock to the south of the farmstead.

Proposed Development

The development consists of the demolition of contemporary and utilitarian farm buildings and the construction of a new 6-bedroom brick farmhouse with garaging. The proposal seeks to re-establish the diminished farmstead and surrounding landscape.

Consultation

The applicant has received pre planning application guidance from Basingstoke and Deane Council on 10th October 2014. 14/02488/EN28. This was supportive of the principal for residential development on the site in particular a single house as this would be more appropriate to the prevailing built character and agricultural origins of the site.

The parish council have been consulted.
Scale & Amount

There is an overall reduction in built form on the farmstead from 4880m³ to 3980m³.

The removal of the existing buildings which are visible from public vantage points due to their scale and materials and the openness of the land will provide an enhancement. The new house and garaging with the use of traditional material will not be so visually apparent and will sit comfortably within the farmstead grouping and wider landscape.

The proposed house is taller than the barns it replaces, but the height is typical of a farmhouse with a pitched roof and will reassert the house as the principal building within the farmstead.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Existing building volume</th>
<th>4904m³</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Building volumes being demolished</td>
<td>3552m³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retained building volume</td>
<td>1352m³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposed house volume</td>
<td>2244m³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposed garage volume</td>
<td>383m³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposed house &amp; garage volume</td>
<td>2627m³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduction in volume</td>
<td>925m³ (19%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Layout

The position of the house was considered initially to the South-West of the Barn and Granary, where a house had been situated historically, as seen on the OS 1:1250 of the 1870's in the Heritage Impact Assessment. The massing and prominence of the house in this location adversely affected the setting of the Barn and Granary, in particular where the listed buildings can be seen from Basingstoke Road. If drawings or photographs of the house were available, one could consider creating a facsimile but they are not and we think this would be a pastiche of the past.

The house position was therefore moved to the East of the Threshing Barn but further from the boundary than the existing modern barns. This retains a key view of the barn and granary along the drive from the road and will re-establish fields as a backdrop to this view.

There are semi mature trees to the North of the site which frame the views out and to the house from the North. These are key elements and the planting for these will be reinforced.

The existing drive arrives in a yard, which will give access to the new garaging, house, granary and threshing barn. The new garaging is placed to the south to enclose the yard. This is of a simple design and of the proportions one would expect of a shelter shed traditionally.
Landscape

The Landscape Context

The Application Site falls within the ‘Basingstoke Down’ Local Character Area (LCA), as defined in the Basingstoke & Deane Landscape Assessment (2001). The site is not in the North Wessex Downs AONB.

Landscape Proposal

The existing trees on site will be retained where possible and new planting will take place as shown on the proposed landscape plan. No trees on site are known to have tree preservation orders or are of particular merit. The lone mature apple tree, a remnant of the old house, will be used as the genesis for a new apple orchard to the south of the drive.

Boundaries surrounding the farmstead are mainly post and wire. It is proposed to replace these with timber post and rails with stock proof netting. Along the field boundaries historic hedge lines have been lost and native hedge planting is proposed to reinforce the surviving trees / shrubs; this will be to the inside of the existing fences. These will enhance the biodiversity creating landscape corridors as well as heal the landscape.

The existing drive will utilise the existing concrete as a sub base and a new tar and gravel topping will be laid over.

Hedges & Trees

- Planting will occur between October and December.

- Hedge plants will be in a staggered formation, with an approximate density of 6 plants /meter, there will be about 400mm between rows. The following species will be used hawthorn, blackthorn, holly, beech, field maple and hazel and will be planted bare root. Hedging plants will be between 40-80cm when planted. Trees will be 8/10 standards. Tree will be a mix of Beech & Ash.

- Hedge to garden will be a Beech hedge planted to the same specifications.

- Plants / trees will have individual unventilated spiral guards to give protection from rabbits / deer

- Dead plants will be removed in the following summer and replanted in the next season (October-December)
Appearance

The farm house and garaging have been designed to respond to the character of the site and surrounding area by careful consideration of local buildings, materials and details whilst seeking to create a house that will be distinct and contribute to the local character.

The proposed farm house is three storeys with the top floor as an attic floor, primarily built in brick with a clay tile roof. It is designed to appear that it was constructed in different periods and this is reflected in the different detailing, form and appearance of the different stacks and lower wing.

The North stack which has lower eaves, two storeys and the simplest detailing is deliberately asymmetrical, suggesting an intermittent development. Whilst the supposed later southern stack has grander detailing with stone window surrounds for instance and a formal symmetry on the central axis line. The single storey T shaped wing is designed to look like a recent extension with large areas of glazing.

The materials are all found in buildings locally, we can provide a photographic record if requested. The main materials are brick with stone detailing, clay and blue slates which are all found in Ramsdell, Monk Sherborne and Upper Wooton and are typical of a farmhouse.

The garage is constructed as a simple agricultural building with a simple form and uses the timber board detail found on the listed barns on the site.

Concrete block walls and buildings that are retained will be rendered, these are shown on the site plan.
Historic Building Context

See separate report prepared by Richard Morris.

Setting

The farmstead has undergone cumulative change mainly in the last 50 years, of note the demolition of a house, barns and erection of modern farm buildings to the East. This has resulted in the loss of the historical hierarchy of the site.

There are two listed buildings within the farmstead, the threshing barn and granary; that remain on the whole in their original form and are in good structural order.

To the East modern farm buildings have been erected between the threshing barn / granary and fields to the East. The modern barns are now in a poor state of repair. The construction of these modern barns varies between timber frame, concrete block and steel portal frames. None of the buildings are architecturally interesting or of any merit. The large scale and form of the buildings do not relate to the historic pattern of the farmstead.

The design and location of the modern barns so not make a contribution to the setting of the listed buildings. The modern barns cause harm to the setting because they cut the link between the barns and fields to the East and have no relation in scale, pattern or material to the listed buildings. The setting will be enhanced by the removal of the modern barns and new house which will result in an overall reduction in the built form surrounding the barns.

A benefit of the new house will be to restore a previous historic relationship between the listed buildings on the farmstead with the wider rural community of Ramsdell; thereby contributing to and maintaining this community.

The re-introduction of the farmhouse will allow for the restoration of the historical hierarchy of the farmstead and provide important context for the onsite heritage assets.
Views

In considering the placement of the proposal we have considered key views which are shown as before and after images in Appendix A.

There are three main views that the public will have of the proposal. These are from the South on Basingstoke Road which is elevated above the house, to the West from the road as it curves around the house and a footpath 250m to the East.

The footpath that runs to the east and north of the site is at it’s closest 250m from the farmstead, the impact on views from this are therefore limited. See Photograph X. This shows the existing trees to the North-East of the site will obscure the proposal from this direction and the removal of the modern farm buildings will be visible. To the north the vegetation gives limited views of the existing and proposed buildings from the public road.

See Viewpoint Document.

Viewpoint 1

This shows the buildings viewed from above and to the south on the Basingstoke Road. The listed buildings will become more prominent as the timber sheds are removed and the house will be in part shielded by the new garage building and trees.

Viewpoint 2

This will improve the view between the two listed buildings and allow the public to view the assets with fields behind as a backdrop.

Viewpoint 3

This view is from the footpath to East and shows that the house will be hidden from view from this angle by the trees on site and one would only get a glimpse of the Threshing Barn from between the two clumps of trees.
Access

The existing entry point into the farmyard will be maintained and utilised. This will be improved by moving the line of wire fence back to give a clearer view to the south.

There is sufficient space for off road car parking (undercover) and space to allow emergency vehicles to access the house. There is sufficient space to allow vehicles to turn around and approach the road in a forward direction.

The barns provide adequate space for the storage of many bicycles.

Hard surface and level access from the parking area to the ground floor of the house is proposed this would be suitable for wheelchair users and ambulant disabled people. The ground floor of the house will meet building regulation requirements for people with limited mobility.