

Guidance for Historic Buildings

Guide No.6. Heritage Statements

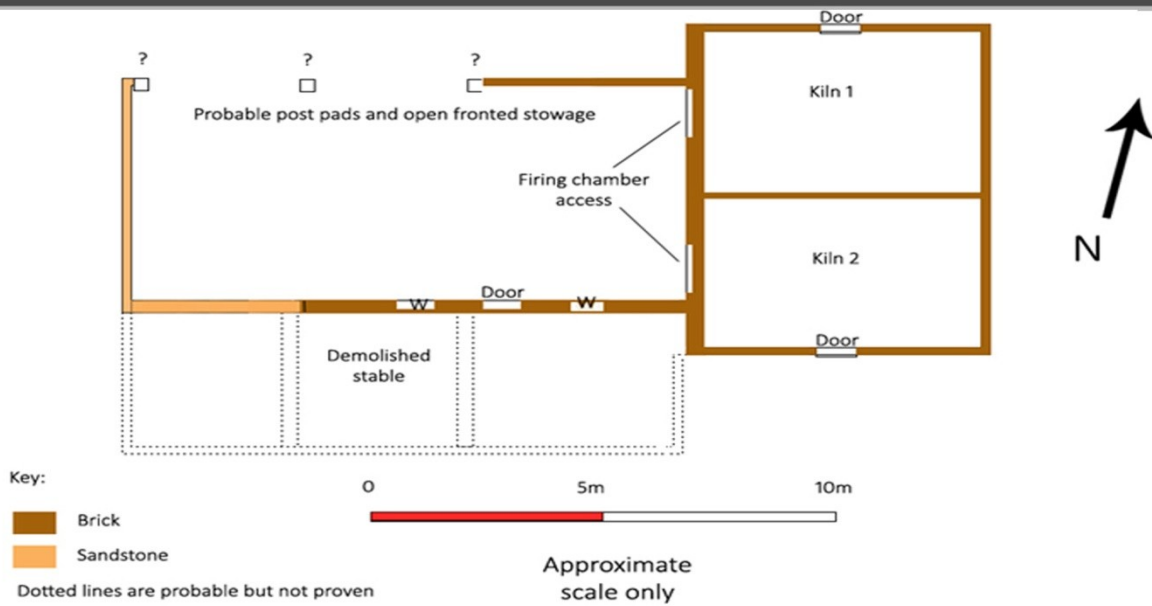


Fig. 11. Conjectural floor plan based on surviving elements.

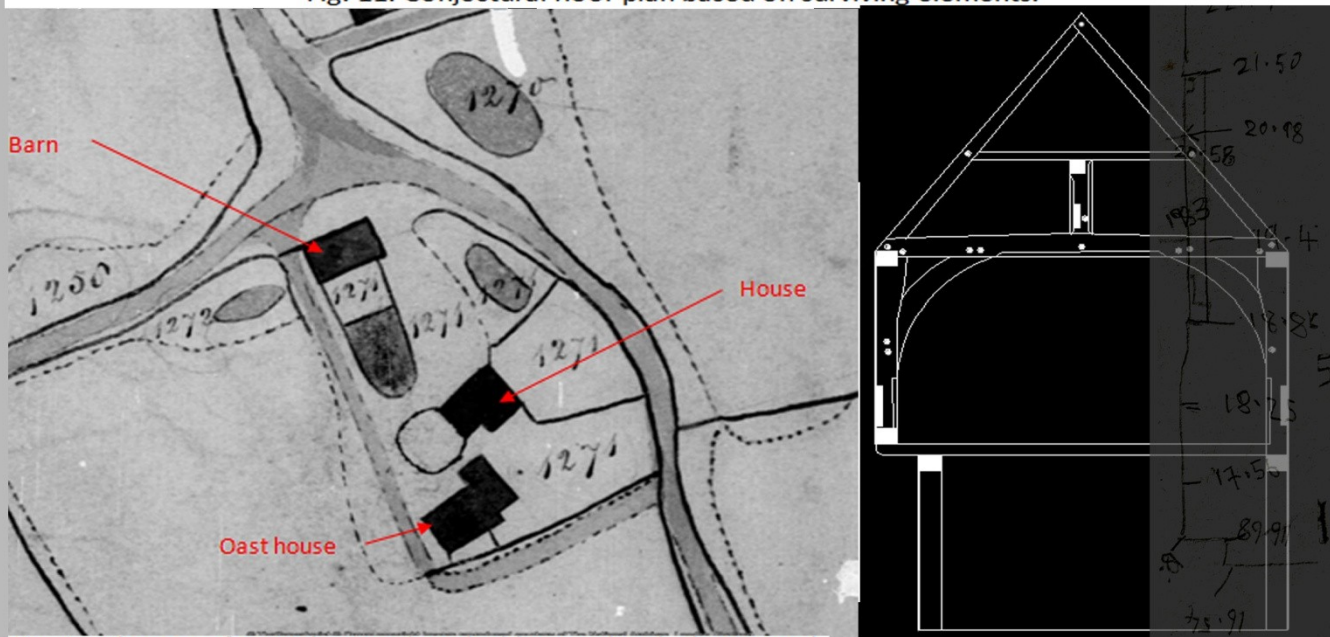


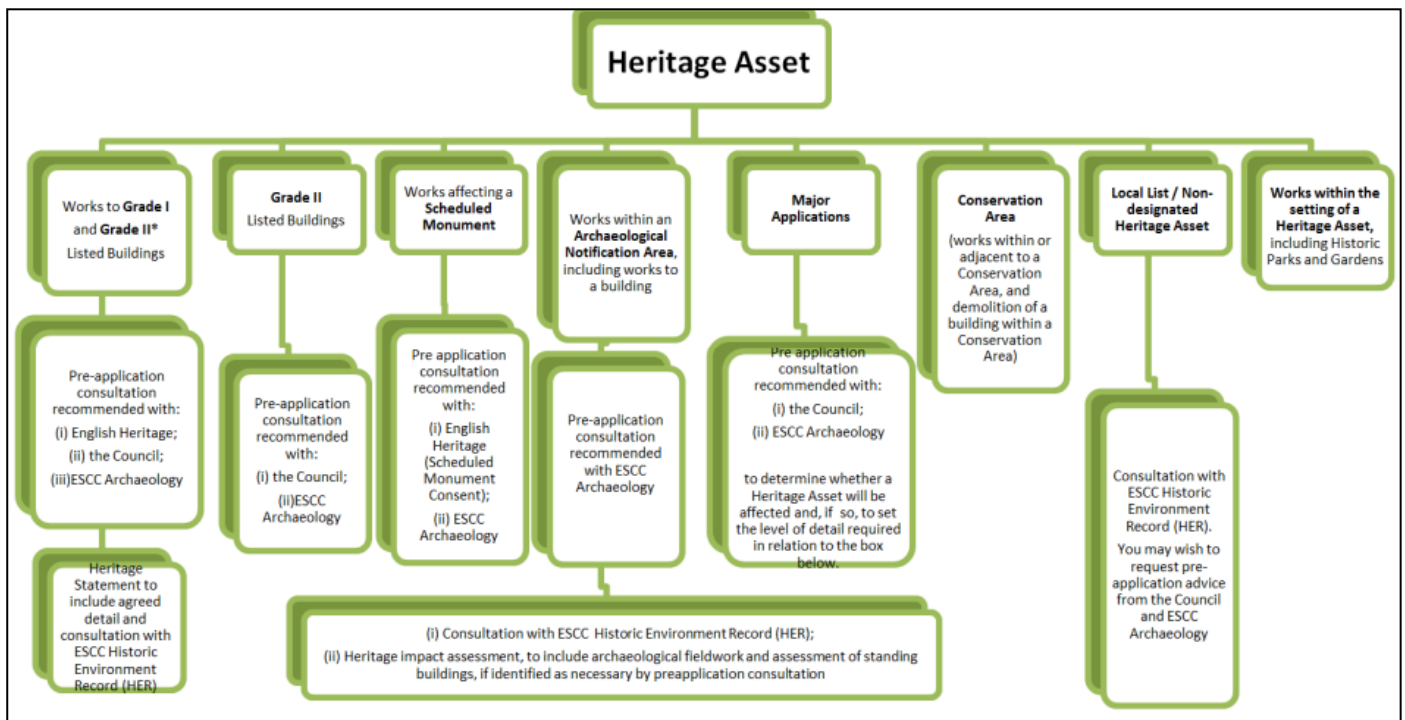
Fig. 4. Tithe map of 1830 showing three buildings within the homestead.

Guide No. 6: Heritage Statements

A Heritage Statement is an important report that usually accompanies a submission for *Listed Building Consent* (LBC) or has been requested by a Conservation Officer (CO) for a building that may be on a *Local List* or is considered to be a *Non-Designated Heritage Asset (NDHA)*. Although such buildings do not have statutory legal protection, they are afforded some protection through the planning process. Unfortunately you may not be aware that the building is an NDHA until you submit a planning application.

There are two types of Heritage Statements; professionally produced ones which are detailed and consider the evolution of a building and then discuss any proposals for development, and basic ones put together by an owner or sometimes the architect, using a template. The basic ones can often be rejected as not being detailed enough and can prevent validation of a planning or LBC application, slowing development down sometimes as a result. These reports are usually accompanied by an Historic Environment Record (HER) report, which can be produced by the HER team at the local records office or County Council departments. It is worth consulting with them first as they will be able to tell you if an HER report is needed and they may also send you a Heritage Statement template to fill in if the proposals are minor. In addition, if the building is in an archaeologically sensitive area, the County Archaeology Team may be consulted by the LPA who can request an archaeological Desk Based Assessment (DBA). This will specifically look at the likelihood of encountering below ground archaeology if ground reductions are proposed, both externally and internally, and this can be requested as a condition placed on applications which have been granted consent.

It is surprising how often archaeology survives inside a building and so any ground reduction, for example the removal of an existing concrete floor, has the potential to expose earlier floor levels of historic importance. Sometimes a 'hybrid' Heritage Statement can be produced which will also cover the archaeology, but confirmation needs to be sought regarding this from either the CO or the County Archaeologist. Given the often complex nature of such requirements (see below) it is often better to let a professional deal with these reports if requested.



Flow chart produced by Wealden District Council with useful guidance available at: https://www.wealden.gov.uk/UploadedFiles/Heritage_Asset_flow_chart.pdf.

However, if the proposals are minor a 'home produced' Heritage Statement may suffice, with templates often available locally through your council web-sites (see below).

Heritage Statement	
Site name	<input type="text"/>
Address of site (including postcode)	<input type="text"/>
Grid Reference	<input type="text"/>
1. Schedule of Works	
Please state the type of proposal e.g. extension to a listed building, internal alterations	
<input type="text"/>	
Please list the works proposed e.g. replacement windows, removal of internal wall, reinstatement of original staircase, damp proofing works to basement etc.	
<input type="text"/>	

Heritage Statement template available at:

(https://www.wealden.gov.uk/UploadedFiles/New_Heritage_Statement_Template_Jan_2018.pdf)

The following headings have been taken from the template example above with clear sections to complete as follows:

- Schedule of Works
- Pre Application Advice
- What heritage asset(s), including their setting, are potentially affected by the proposals?
- What is known about the affected heritage asset(s)?
- Using the information obtained through research and on-site analysis provide a summary of the history of the site/building.
- What research have you undertaken to understand the significance of the heritage asset(s) affected?
- What is important about the affected heritage asset(s) ('the significance')?
- How will the proposals impact on the significance of the heritage asset(s) and their setting?
- How has the proposal been designed to conserve the significance of the heritage asset(s) and their setting?
- If further space is required this can be attached as an appendix to this report.

If you decide to undertake this yourself, further information can be accessed at:

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021 (especially Section 16 paragraphs 189-208), available at:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1005759/NPPF_July_2021.pdf

General Government Guidance on the Historic Environment, available at:
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/conserving-and-enhancing-the-historic-environment>

Managing Significance in Decision Taking in the Historic Environment, available at:
<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/gpa2-managing-significance-in-decision-taking/gpa2/>

The Setting of Heritage Assets, available at:
<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/gpa3-setting-of-heritage-assets/heag180-gpa3-setting-heritage-assets/>

The detailed, professional reports will look at several critical areas that a CO will want to see discussed in more major proposals, as follows:

- Introduction and background details of a building

- Archaeological/historical background incorporating an HER report and discussion on the archaeological potential of a site.

A historic map regression showing how the footprint of a building or site has changed over the years with discussion as shown below:

5.2 The First Edition Ordnance Survey (OS) map of 1871 (Fig. 5) shows the Site with two small outbuildings to the south. The orchard is now clearly depicted to the east side and there appears to be only one main track on the western side which no longer hugs the southern boundary of the Oast House.

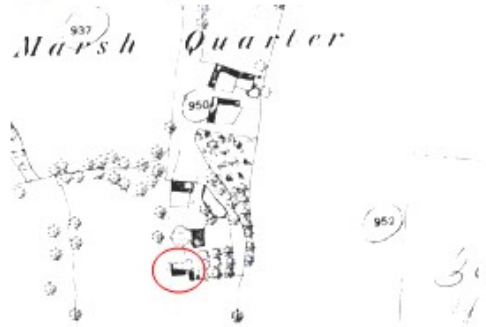


Fig. 5 The OS map of 1871.

5.3 The OS map of 1897 (Fig. 6) shows no further changes except a new, L-shaped track/footpath which heads south.




Fig. 6. The OS map of 1897.

5.4 The OS map of 1907 (Fig. 7) shows few changes except a few additional divisions within the barn to the north.




Fig. 7. The OS map of 1907.

5.5 The OS map for 1938, drawn up during WWII (Fig. 8), shows the L-shaped track to the south has gone, and the western track now ends at the barn within the yard to the north. The small outbuildings south of the Oast House have gone and there is a new boundary line here, and another with the farmhouse. This may suggest that the Oast House no longer serves as a kiln and may have had a different function, perhaps due to the war.




Fig. 8. The OS map of 1938.

- A detailed walkover survey and photographic survey discussing each room and extensions/outbuildings with measured drawings where needed, as shown below:

6.0 WALKOVER SURVEY

6.1 A brief walkover survey of the Site was undertaken by the author on 21st September 2020. The objective of the walkover survey was to identify the adjacent topography as well as any landscape or archaeological features not evident on existing maps, and also to assess any areas of disturbance that may have impacted upon any potential below ground archaeology. The walkover survey was rapid with notes taken at the time and was not intended as a detailed survey.

6.2 The objective of the building assessment was to provide a brief overview of the date and the form of construction of the existing building(s) on site. In addition, any removed structures or features were identified, along with their relationship to those still extant. In noting this, the significance of the structures individually and as a group can be assessed.

6.3 Overview of the building (Fig. 11)

The location of all photographs taken is shown in the Appendix. The structure has been significantly eroded over time and the roof is missing (Plate 1). The former storage building is aligned approximately east-west and there is a rectangular structure on the east side which is divided by a central wall creating two small rectangular kilns (Plate 2).

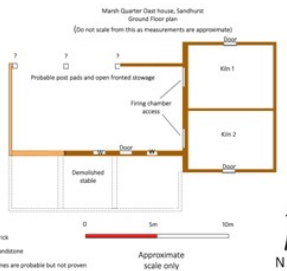


Fig. 11. Conjectural floor plan based on surviving elements.




Plate 1. Looking northwest towards the kilns with the chimneys of the farmhouse in the background.




Plate 2. Looking northwest inside Kiln No. 2.

There is an area of herostanding to the south which consists of ceramic brick tiles with two drains, which once served a stable block which was probably built as a lean-to structure against the existing storage building (Plate 3).




Plate 3. Looking northeast towards the former stable floor south of the oast house.

Unfortunately the building became redundant several years ago and it has slowly eroded, with only brick or stone walls surviving at a low height. It is likely that the storage building was timber-framed at first floor level (Fig. 11), with open fronted cart bays on the north side. The brick walls are slightly different, with the Storage walls laid in English Garden Bond with bright orange, oxidized brickwork to the south whereas the kilns are laid in Flemish Bond with some burnt headers. Occasionally these kiln walls are laid with English Garden bond.

There may even have been a gentry on the west side, with a winch for removing the hops off a loaded cart, as the track previously passed by the west side of the building and turned at right angles at the south-west corner before heading eastwards where it met up with another farm track. There is little evidence to suggest that this was the case but it would be reasonable to suggest that the hops were loaded at this end, based on the location of the track and existing examples elsewhere in Kent.

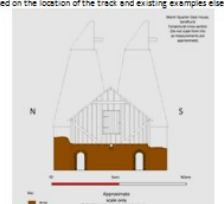


Fig. 12. Conjectural cross section with timber-framed first floor Storage.

- A statement of significance looking at the most important aspects of a building and highlighting them as shown on the next page and should discuss certain values, including historic, evidential, aesthetic and tangible cultural aspects, as well as intangible elements.

9.0 ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

9.1 Statement of Significance

Historic England (formerly English Heritage) provides guidance on establishing the significance of heritage assets and on defining the settings of Listed Buildings. These are the Good Practice Advice Notes in Planning Note 2 (GPAN2) – *Managing Significance in Decision-Taking* and Good Practice Advice Notes in Planning Note 3 (GPAN3) – *The Setting of Heritage Assets*.

GPAN2 stresses that understanding the significance is important to achieve conservation of the asset. This is further explored in *Statement of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets Historic England Advice Note 12*. An understanding of the extent of the significance will lead to an understanding of how adaptable the building is. The level of significance helps to determine how policies should be applied.

Significance is a collective term for the sum of all the heritage values attached to a place, be it a building, an archaeological site or a larger historic area such as a whole village or streetscape. At least four sets of values can be ascribed to a place:

- **Evidential value:** the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity;
- **Historical value:** the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present;
- **Aesthetic value** and the ways in which people draw sensory stimulation from a place. These are interests in construction, craftsmanship and decoration of buildings and structures of all types and overall, the general aesthetics of a place. They can

arise from conscious design or fortuitously from the way the heritage asset has evolved;

- **Communal value** and the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory. Heritage assets provide a material record of our nation's history and meaning for communities and can symbolise wider values such as faith and cultural identity.

In this case, the significance lies in the historic character, appearance and fabric of the farmstead as a whole and is focussed on the survival of the 16th/17th century farmhouse, which has more significance than the Oast House. It is visually cohesive, built with both timber-framing and in bricks of a similar type and all four values can be applied to it. It was built as a traditional farm house, and has since been altered but this adds to the significance of its survival. It sits in the historic core of the farmstead, detached but related in form and function to other historic buildings, some of which have since been demolished.

The Oast House, being in a ruinous state, has much less significance applied to it, although it still has evidential, historical and communal values applied to it. Being of probable 18th century date and of an unusual form, it therefore still retains some significance but the existing condition of it hugely debases this at present.

The assessment of the significance of the Site confirms that the highest significance belongs to the farmhouse. The proposals avoid any interruption to the physical fabric of this and relate solely to setting issues within the wider farmstead environment which are discussed in full detail below.

- A setting exercise looking at the immediate and wider setting of a building and how any development might impact on that, as shown in the example below:

9.2 Setting issues relating to the Site.

Historic England guide GPAN3 provides a structured approach to defining and assessing the setting of an historic asset. This discusses the importance of the character of an area, the context and views. Whilst the setting itself is not a heritage asset, it may have some significance in its own right. Setting is not fixed and is not restricted to lands within the same ownership of the applicants. Any change will affect how the setting of a heritage asset is experienced, be that from the public or private domain

The main 16th/17th century farmstead and its setting, along with its rear outbuildings, form a small but harmonious grouping in a fairly pristine historic environment with no modern dwellings encroaching into the group. It is important that this historic setting is preserved. The re-instatement of the Oast and Stowage building, whilst being *conjectural*, are the result of sound research and would prove to enhance the significance of the historic farmstead, particularly the Listed Farmhouse. The current state of disrepair does not provide an aesthetic background when viewed from the public footpath looking towards the farmstead and so debases this value somewhat. It is neither clear what the original function of the building was as it stands in such a ruinous state. Whilst being separated from the wider function of the farmstead as a whole through change of use, a re-build will

clearly make a statement within the wider setting which leaves no doubt as to the original function of the building and its place within the historic farmstead. The cartographic regression clearly shows several agricultural buildings have since been demolished. Therefore it is a priority that those that remain should have life breathed back into them. As long as the design and materials blend appropriately and do not detract from the significance of the Listed Building, which now stands isolated as a solitary sentinel within what was once the heart of the farmstead (See recommendations in Section 10 below). Any minor impact to the remaining historic fabric would be offset by the resurrection of the building as a whole, and as such is considered to be of huge and positive benefit.

The proposed development is visible from a public footpath, but no other properties over-look the Site, excepting the barn conversion to the north. The proposals (Figs 15 and 16) will not draw the eye and have been designed to blend in with the historic and vernacular setting of the farmstead. This has been achieved in conjunction with advice contained within this report, including the *conjectural views* of the building, based on other well known, local examples. As such, the project represents a sound, balanced and informed re-construction.

- An Impact Assessment looking in detail at all proposals and considering the impact to the significance of a building, as seen in the example below:

9.3 Impact of proposed development

According to information provided by the client, the aim of the proposed works is to re-build the entire building, including the re-instatement of the double-kiln. It is also proposed that the single-storey stable attachment is re-built. It is likely that there will be ground reduction inside and externally for services so there are recommendations for this in Section 10 below. Historic England advice note HEAN2; Making Changes to Heritage Assets advises that if the following issues can be resolved, then restoration is *likely* to be acceptable. Our comments follow highlighted in green in response to these issues as follows:

- *The significance of the elements that would be restored decisively outweighs the significance of those that would be lost. We do not consider any significance to be lost through a programme of restoration, only enhancement.*

- *The work proposed respects previous forms of the heritage asset. It has been advised that ALL remaining historic fabric should be used where possible, in conjunction with a structural engineers report and building regulations. In addition, the laser scan and historic map regressions have effectively re-built the plan form and historic photographs have been used to inform the above ground designs.*

- *No archaeological interest is lost if the restoration works could later be confused with the original fabric. It has been suggested that the use of date stones for the modern re-build would be appropriate and would highlight the modern areas of the build. The laser survey and this report will also be retained within the archaeological record for posterity, as they will be archived in the Historic Environment Records. The use of different building materials may be appropriate, such as the use of different (Lime) mortar for the original brickwork, but these are suggestions which should be more fully discussed with the Conservation Officer.*

- *The maintenance implications of the proposed restoration are considered to be sustainable. It is assumed to be so but as heritage consultants we would not be able to provide the information required for this point.*

The proposals form an interesting project to re-instate the heritage setting; relationships between the Listed Farmhouse and the Oast House will be 're-forged' and will preserve the historic landscape and as such the proposals are fully supported.

The existing building, as it stands, does not hold *great* significance and is not of any *great* age although it does hold historical value as seen above.

As the proposed development seeks to conserve and re-instate the original features, it is considered to be of considerable positive benefit.

Discussion and recommendations is the final section with professional discourse and guidance. In addition to all of the above, if the building is part of a historic farmstead, a Farmstead Appraisal will be required <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/national-farmsteads-character-statement/national-farmsteads-character-statement/>. Help for these aspects is widely available through the Historic England website with detailed leaflets which are freely available as downloads, as discussed above.