

Heritage Impact Assessment

Church Farm House, Rushden, Buntingford

Replacement Extension

August 2025



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PROJECT

Removal of existing single storey extension and replacement single storey extension

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report has been prepared to accompany the pre-application enquiry for the removal of an existing 2020 unauthorised extension and proposed replacement extension to Church Farm House, Rushden, Buntingford, SG9 0SQ (*the “Site”*).
- 1.2 Following an initial pre-app 24/01819/PRELB, the Local Planning Authority were made aware of the 2020 extension after a site visit on 28th November 2024 by the Conservation Officer, where verbal feedback was received that a green roof for a proposed contemporary extension would be preferred.
- 1.3 No written feedback from the Conservation Officer has been received other than the below referencing the current oak structure proposed for replacement as detailed in this report:

“Since listing in January 1986, it has been extended on two occasions: a rear conservatory approved in 1992 (ref.92/00733/1LB), and a rear front porch approved in 1997 (ref. 97/00748/1LB). The rear conservatory has since been replaced in part by a glazed oak structure with a gently sloping flat roof. The extension is on the same footprint as the earlier conservatory with no enlargement to the opening between the original cottage and the extension. It is this later addition which is proposed to be replaced by the proposed extension.”

- 1.4 The purpose of this report is to address some of these concerns and understand, assess the significance and to analyse the impact of the proposed work including in order to comply with paragraph 207 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Historic England Advice Note 12.
- 1.5 This Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) should be read in conjunction with the other supporting planning documents and drawings prepared by other consultants.

2. Methodology

- 2.1 The methodology in this report will be based upon Historic England's *Managing Significance in Decision Taking in the Historic Environment* which sets guidance on how to assess the nature, extent and level of significance to support sustainable development proposals.
- 2.2 This report has primarily been produced through desktop research, using relevant secondary sources including:
- Historic Environment Record (HER)
 - Historic England National Heritage List England (NHLE)
 - Hertfordshire Archives
 - UK Census Records (online resource)
 - National Library of Scotland (online resource)
- 2.3 The assessment is primarily a desk-based study which has utilised secondary sources derived from a variety of published sources. The assumption has been made that this data is reasonably accurate. The records held by the HER and historic maps are not an infinite record of all heritage assets.

3. Identifying Heritage Assets

3.1 The NPPF (Annex 2 Glossary) defines a heritage asset as:

“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)”.

3.2 Church Farm House is a Grade II listed cottage, listed in 1986 and situated in the village of Rushden (List Entry Number: 1347368). The cottage is a late C16 timber framed one and a half storey thatched building, situated at the centre of the village.

3.3 The Site is situated within the Rushden Conservation Area. Table 1 and Figure 1 outline the relevant heritage assets in the vicinity of the Site.

Figure 1: Designated Heritage Assets in Context

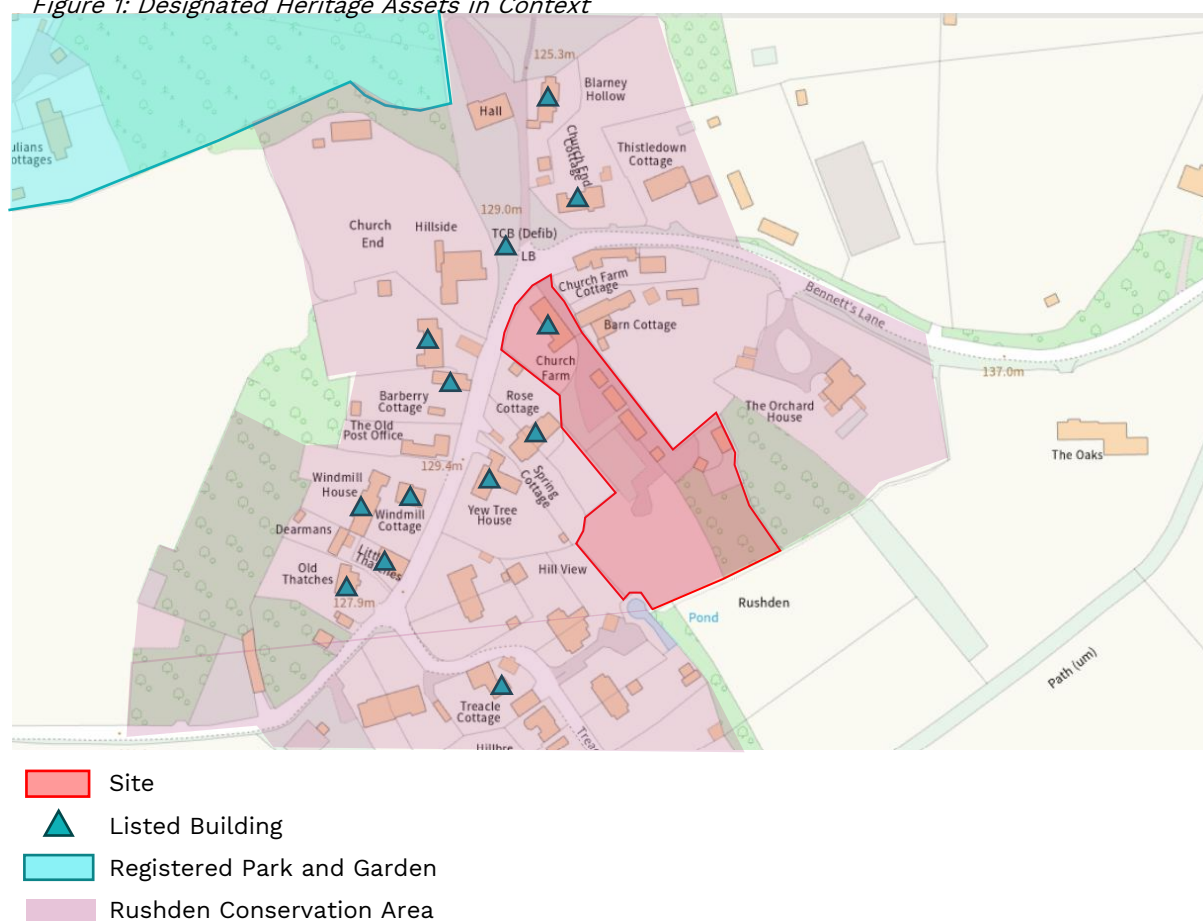


Table 1: Designated Heritage Assets Within The Site

Heritage Asset	List Entry Number	Designation	Description
Church Farm House	1347368	II	Late C16 timber frame cottage, formerly farmhouse. One and a half storeys with thatched roof, raised in the C20 and extended.
Rushden Conservation Area	N/A	Conservation Area	Designated in 1969 with boundary extended to include medieval earthworks north of church in 1980.

4. Planning Policy

4.1 Planning decisions should be taken in accordance with local plan policy unless material considerations indicate otherwise, Section 38(6) of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 refers. This statement is written in the context of the following legislative, planning policy and guidance:

- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act (1990)
- National Planning Policy Framework (2024) *'The Framework'*
- National Planning Practice Guidance: *Conserving and enhancing the historic environment (2023)*
- Conservation Principles: *Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment (2008)*
- Good Practice Guide 2: *Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (2015)*
- Statements of Heritage Significance: *Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets (2019)*

4.2 Section 66(1) of the Act (1990) states that when:

"...considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses."

4.3 Decision-makers should give *"considerable importance and weight"* to the desirability of preserving the setting of listed buildings when carrying out the balancing exercise¹.

4.4 In the *South Lakeland District Council v Secretary of State for the Environment and another [1992]*, The House of Lords resolved that:

¹ Barnwell Manor Wind Energy Limited v East Northants DC, English Heritage, National Trust & SSCLG [2014] EWCA Civ.137.

“Statutorily.... preserving the character of appearance of an area is achieved either by a positive contribution to preservation or by development, which leaves character or appearance unharmed, that is to say preserved.”

- 4.5 Section 16 of the NPPF contains policies for conserving and enhancing the historic environment. In particular, para. 207 of the Framework is applicable:

“In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant 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 proposal on their significance.”

- 4.7 The following policies from the **North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 – 2031** (adopted November 2022) are relevant:

- Policy SP1: Sustainable development in North Hertfordshire
- Policy SP13: Historic environment
- Policy CGB1: Rural Areas beyond the Green Belt.
- Policy CGB4: Existing buildings in the Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt

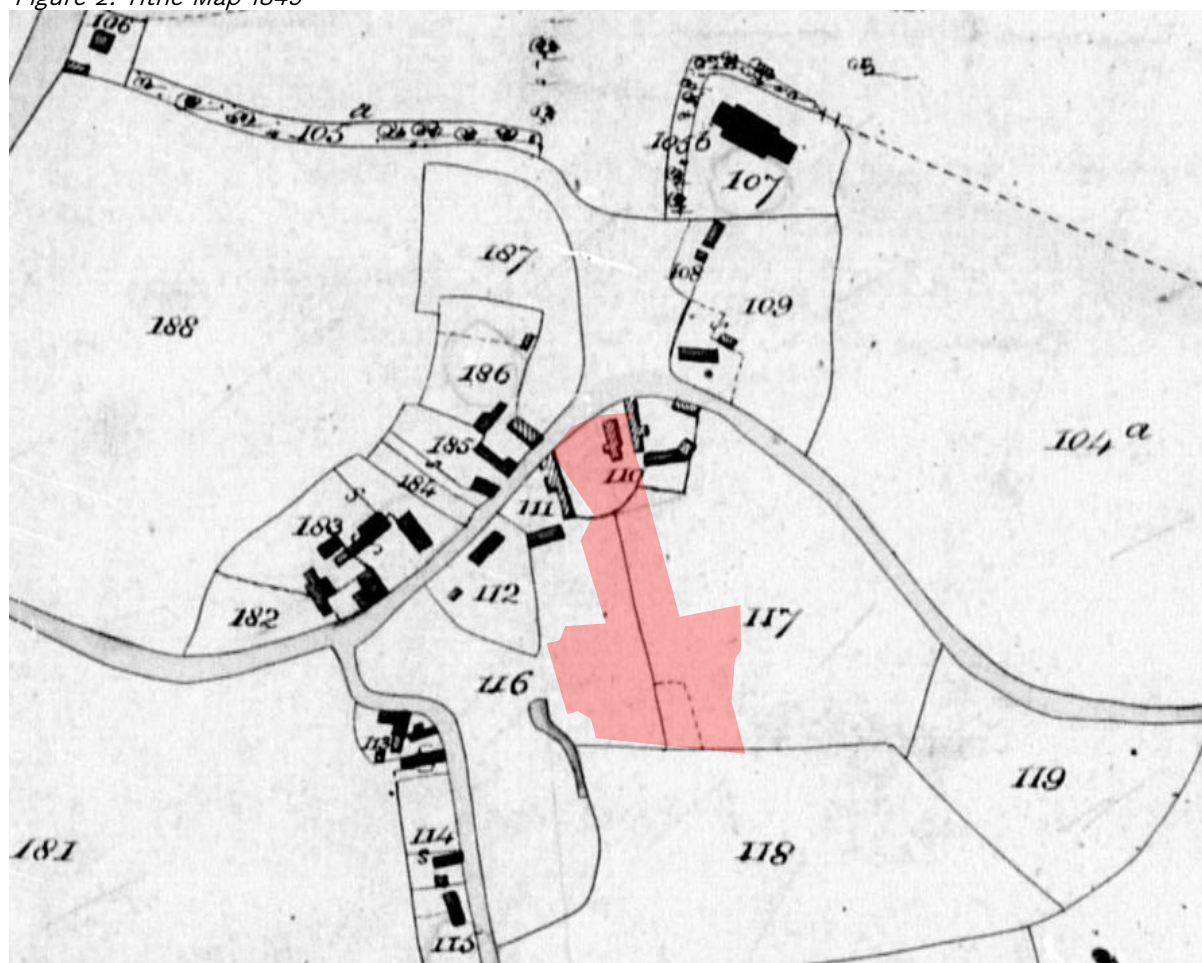
5. Historical Development & Appraisal

- 5.1 The Site is situated at the centre of the village of Rushden, approximately 3.5 miles northwest of Buntingford and 6 miles northeast of Stevenage. The village was first recorded in the Domesday book as a large settlement of 19 households with around 960 acres of land in cultivation. The area was overseen by Sigar of Chocques in 1086, a lord established by William the Conquer after the Battle of Hastings, having previously been held by freemen nominated by Archbishop Stigand.
- 5.2 By the 1200s, the village was recorded as having its own vicar from the 1220s onwards. The present-day church's Nave was built in the 1350. This indicates that there was likely a timber-built church within the village prior to the building of the more permanent stone-built place of worship. The village was held by the de Cioches's and later the de Bethune family as overlords. The first sub-tenant to be recorded was William Basset in 1239, with the lordship passing to Peter Basset and then onto Robert Basset who is mentioned in 1384.
- 5.3 The area retained a continuous lordship over the Rushden manorial lands throughout the centuries, indicating that there was a large enough settlement in the village and surrounding area to support a manor. In 1336, the Church's tithes were declared the Vicarage's living, albeit a comparatively low income. The church has an elevated position, off the road which formerly connected Baldock and Buntingford. Bradfield Grange, known as the Friars farm, was established in the early 1400s for the local Cistercian Monks.
- 5.4 Rushden's village development was concentrated to the south of the church, known as Church End. In 1603, land opposite the Church Green was sold by the manorial family to the sister of the Vicar, with 43 acres of land. This land was used to establish Church Farm and provides an approximate date for the farmhouse (Site) of 1603 onward. This date correlates with the cottage's early C17 design, with the name of Church Farm further validating the building's construction and ownership by a person associated with the church.

- 5.5 Given that the parish records indicate that the church took only a modest income, it is likely that the vicarage was taken on by a member of the lower aristocracy, whose siblings would have had to provide their own income generation. The 40 acres, whilst not providing an extensive estate, would have been enough for a family to generate an additional income, beyond the normal subsistence farming of the time.
- 5.6 The earliest cartographic record available for Church Farm is provided 200 years later, by the Tithe map of 1845 (Figure 2). The farm was recorded as still within the ownership of the manorial land, indicating that its ownership had reverted back to Julians manorial estate and was occupied by a farmer, Elizabeth Field. The mapping reveals that the house was situated within the farm fold, at the far side of the village green with the Church and Vicarage. The farmhouse sat separately from a courtyard plan of agricultural buildings. The tithe records indicate that the modest farmstead of around 44 acres was in mixed agricultural use, with 31 acres utilised for arable and 8 acres of pasture grazing.² This indicates that the farmstead was self-sufficient in its own meat and dairy production, with a focus on the sale of crops providing the farm's income.

² Tithe Record, Hertfordshire, Rushden, plot 110.

Figure 2: Tithe Map 1845

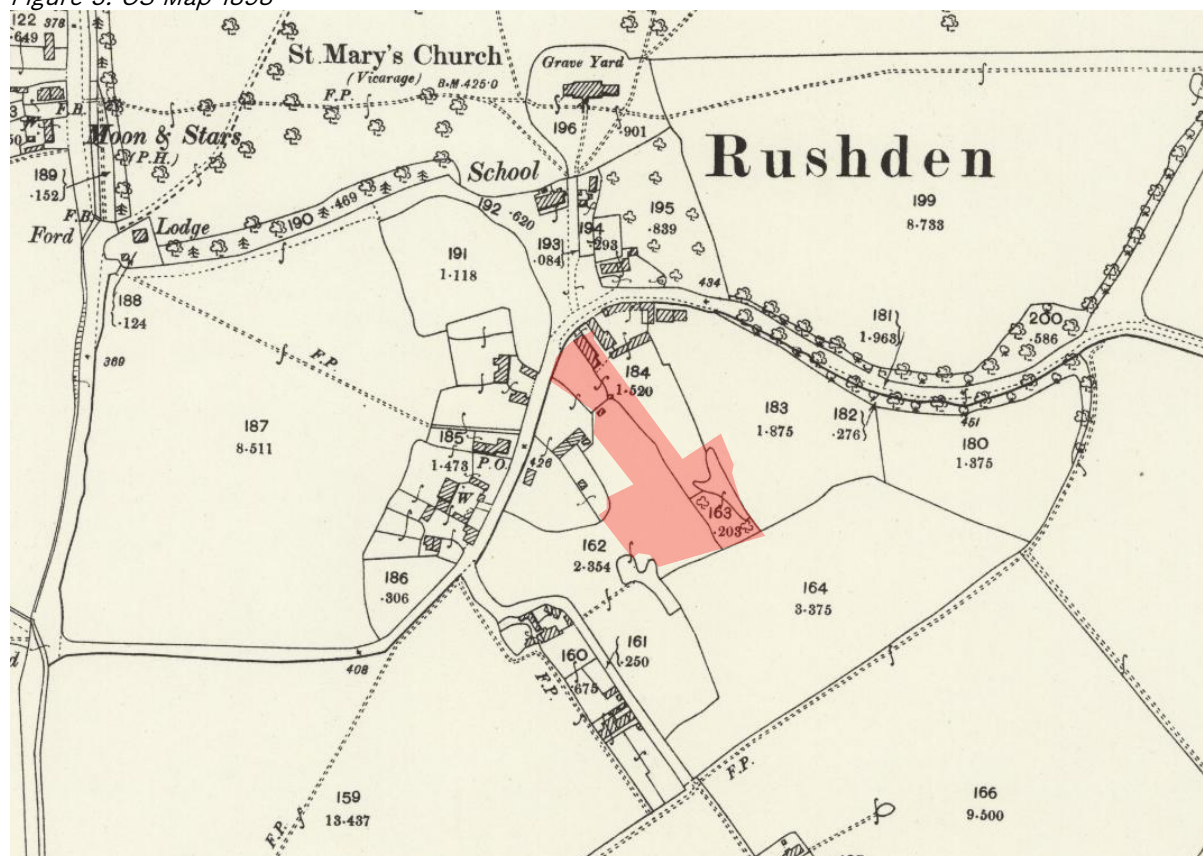


- 5.7 The 1855 Post Office Directory for the area provides further details regarding the village. Rushden was recorded as having an area of 1486 acres, with a population of 321 people in 1851.³ The farm was occupied by James Bygrave, with his wife, five children and employing an additional labourer.⁴

³ Post Office, *Directory of Essex, Herts, Kent ...*, 1855. [Part 1: Counties & Localities] p.229. Available at:

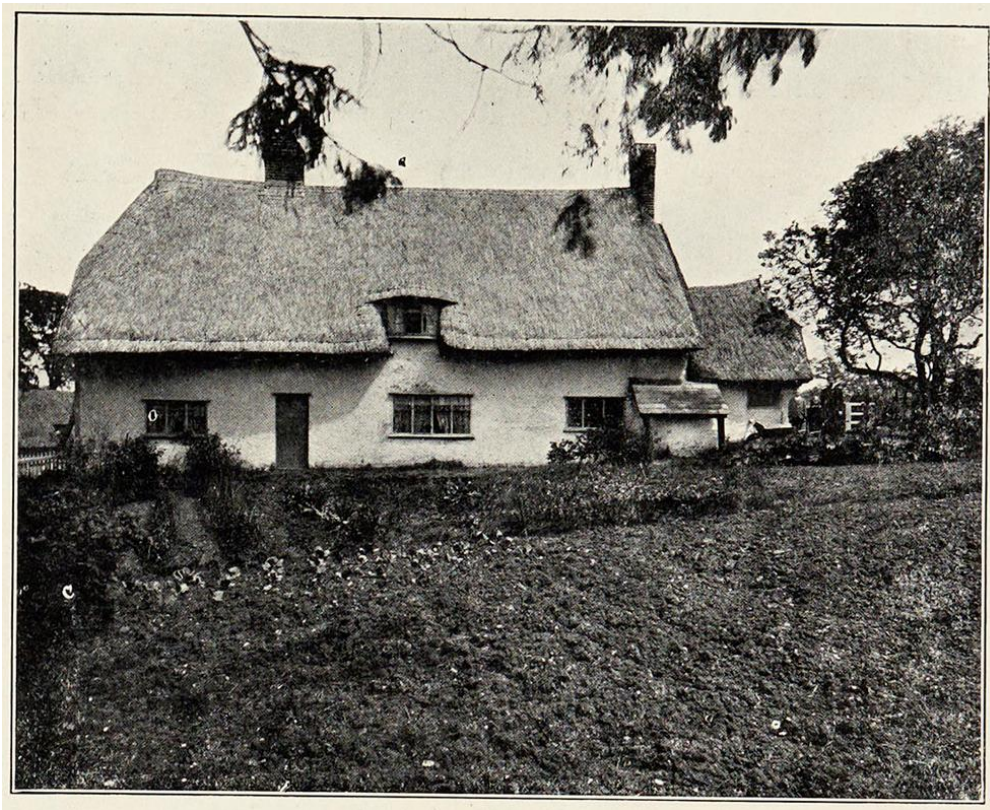
<https://specialcollections.le.ac.uk/digital/collection/p16445coll4/id/365759/rec/8>

⁴ National Census, *Hertfordshire 1851: Rushden*. Available at: www.thegenealogist.co.uk



⁵ National Census, *Hertfordshire 1891: Rushden*. Available at: www.thegenealogist.co.uk

Figure 3: Archive Ref: 79294. Sales particulars bundle of properties in Rushden July 1919 ©Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies [West Elevation]



- 5.9 In 1919, the farm was sold by the Julians manorial estate, with the sitting yearly tenancy of Mr and Mrs Bygraves paying an annual rent of £77:10:0.⁶ The farmhouse was rendered, covering its timber-built structure and contained two sitting rooms, a kitchen, dairy, pantry and three bedrooms.
- 5.10 The sales particulars also list the farm buildings comprising of an implement and cart shed, three piggeries, two loose boxes, two open sheds, a calf pen and two-stall cowshed, a three-bay barn, a hen and a fowl house, and a six-stall stable. This confirms that the farm was previously under mixed cultivation. The accompanying estate map details that the land directly surrounding the village was all included within the holding of Church Farm. Subsequently, the farm was central to all agricultural activity within the village.

⁶ Archive Ref: 79294. *Sales particulars bundle of properties in Rushden 1919*. Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies.

Figure 4: Archive Ref: 79294. Sales particulars bundle of properties in Rushden July 1919
 ©Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies, with Church Farm's land annotated in blue

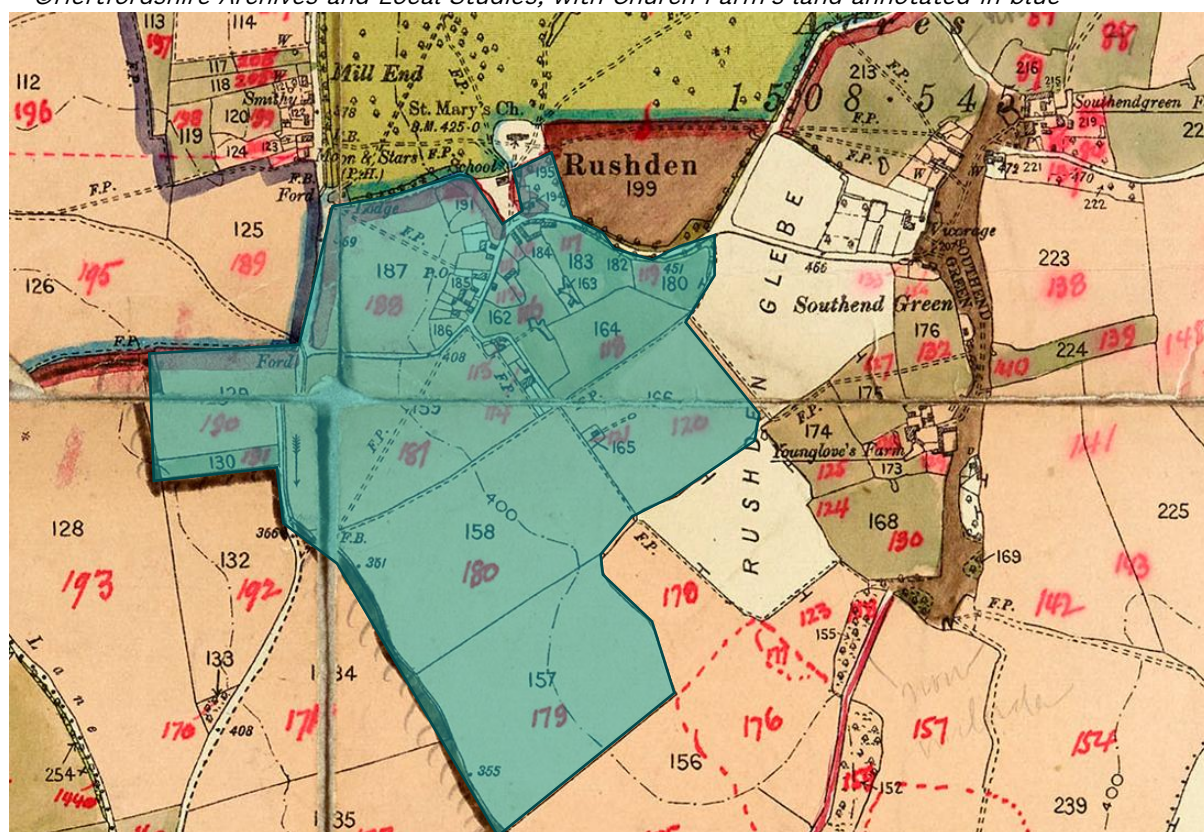
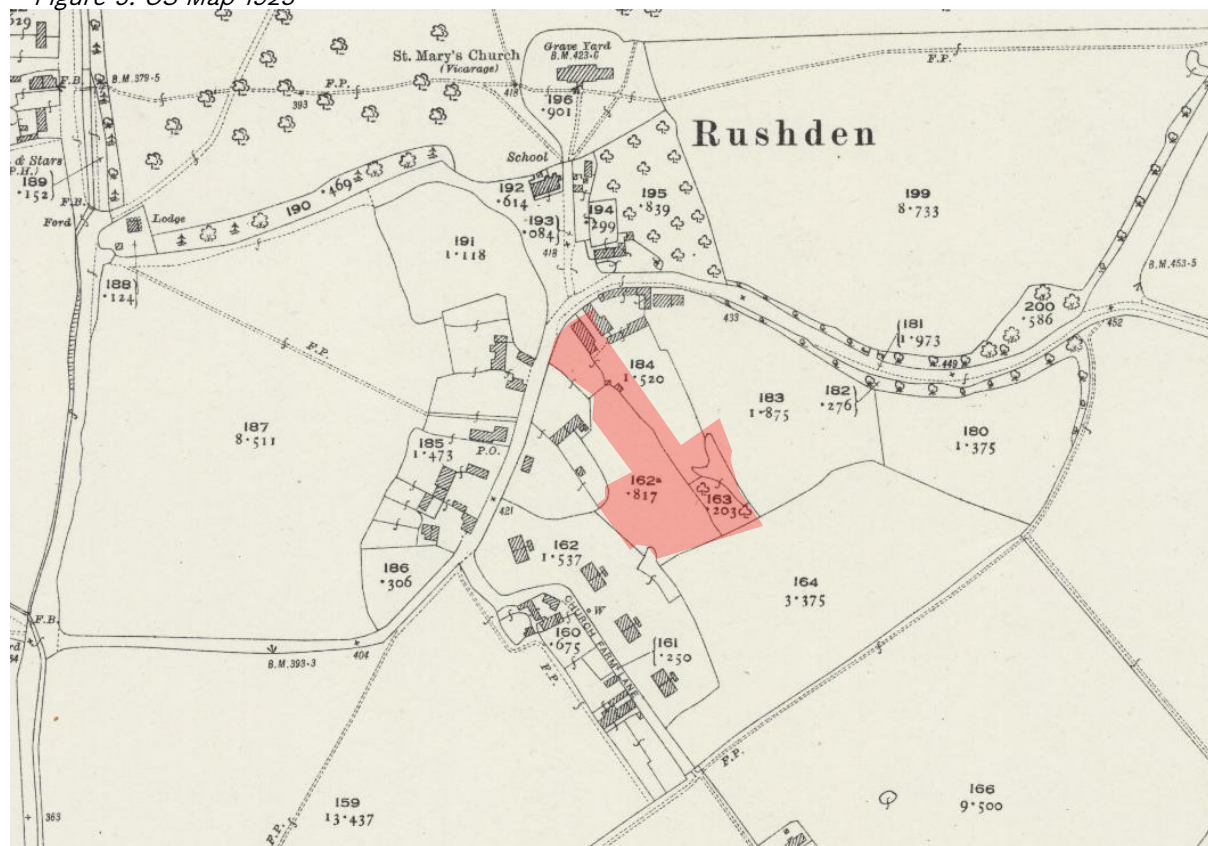


Figure 5: OS Map 1923



- 5.11 In 1921, the farm contents were sold. Its livestock was sold first, and shortly afterwards, the cottage's tenancy was relinquished. Horses and cattle were listed for sale by auction "together with a large quantity of agricultural implements". Little alteration took place on the farm itself during this time, as development was focused on the farmland surrounding the village.

Figure 6: Archive Ref: DE/X922/21/3 Photograph of Church Farm, a timber frame cottage in Rushden, 1960. © Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies [East Elevation]



- 5.12 Throughout the mid-C20, the farmhouse was occupied by businessman, Henry Fletcher, founder of the popular Derwent House store, on London Rd in Liverpool.⁷ This indicates that by the 1960s, the farmhouse had been separated from the farm's agricultural operations. As the farmhouse and land were sold as one following his death in the 1970s, the farmland was likely rented by a larger local farm and was brought back in hand following the sale.

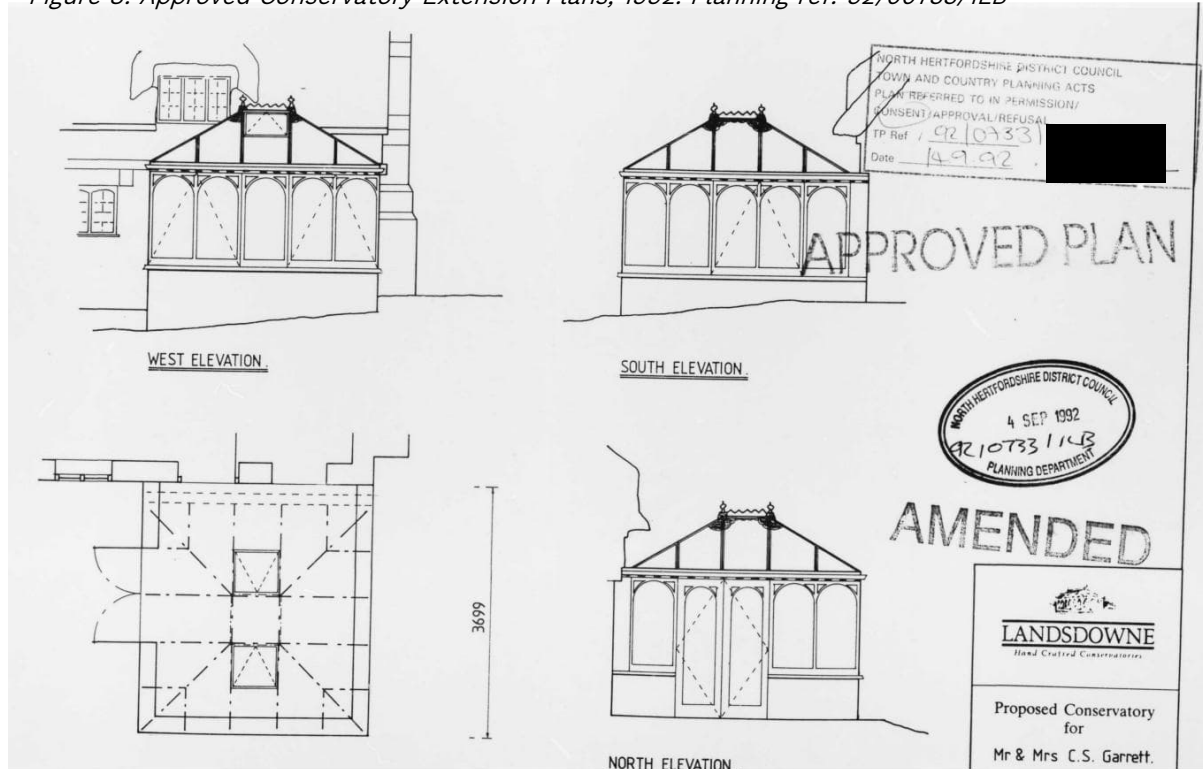
⁷ Liverpool Daily Post, Founder Dies, Tuesday 01 June 1976. Available at: <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0005475/19760601/001/0001>

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conversion to residential use in 1987, and a dividing wall was installed between the farmhouse and yard creating a distinct break between the house and the rest of the historic farmstead.

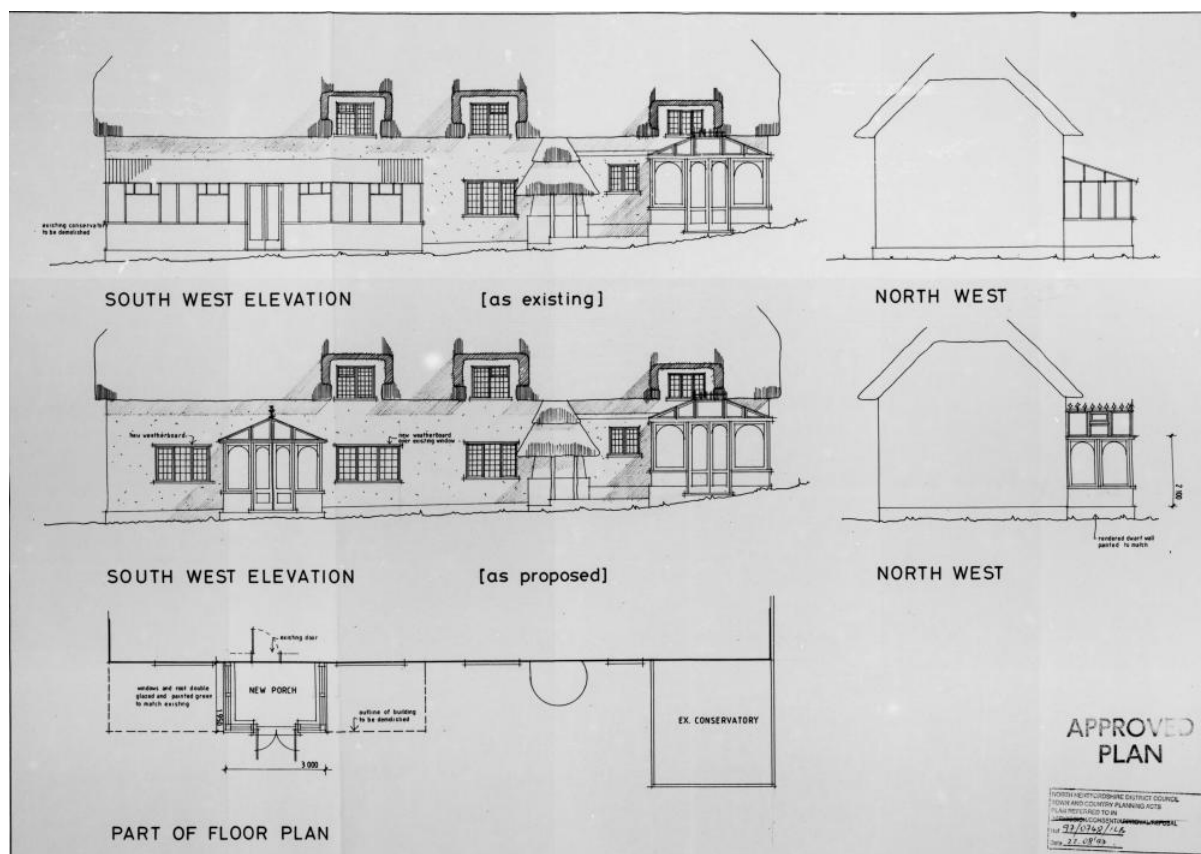
- 5.16 Church Farm House was Grade II Listed in 1986. In 1992, Listed Building Consent (LBC) was granted for a rear conservatory, attached to the late 1970s extension (Planning ref: [92/00733/1LB](#)).

Figure 8: Approved Conservatory Extension Plans, 1992. Planning ref: 92/00733/1LB



- 5.17 A further LBC was granted for a second conservatory extension on the west elevation in May 1997 to replace an existing lean-to extension with a secondary square conservatory, creating an entrance porch (Planning ref: [97/00747/1HH](#)).

Figure 8: Approved Replacement Conservatory, 1997. Planning ref: 97/00747/1HH



5.18 Minor works have since been undertaken to the farmhouse, including the alteration of a window to the entrance porch (Planning ref: [12/02766/1LB](#)). The two conservatories have since been removed, with the larger of the two replaced with a new timber-framed conservatory which remains in keeping with the approved plans.

Figure 9: West Elevation of Grade II Listed Church Farm House



- 5.19 Works have taken place in 2018 to convert the former 1970s tack rooms and store to provide a home office facility (Planning ref: [18/02759/FP](#)). The third store was also granted approval for the replacement of windows and addition of cladding to allow the building to be utilised as a home gym space, with French doors since approved (Planning ref: [19/02907/FPH](#) and [20/03077/NMA](#)).

Figure 9: 1970s store buildings, since converted to Home Office and Gym.



6. Statement of Significance

6.1 Significance is defined in the Framework as:

“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...significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting...”

6.2 The Farmhouse was listed Grade II in 1986; and is therefore a designated heritage asset. The curtilage of the building, having been separated from the farmyard by the date of listing, is limited to the current garden area of the farmhouse. Consequently, the neighbouring barn buildings are excluded from this assessment. For completeness, the significance all buildings within the red line boundary have been considered. However, the curtilage of the listed building is limited to the garden directly in front of the Listed farmhouse.

6.3 Designated heritage assets are of significance for their archaeological, historic, artistic and architectural interest; further discussed below.

Archaeological Interest

6.4 The existing house was recorded as being built on agricultural land associated with the Church during the early C17. Parish records indicate that there was unlikely to have been a dwelling on the Site immediately prior to the building of the farmhouse and none is indicated from other sources; therefore, the farmhouse is unlikely to provide direct evidence for settlement in Rushden prior to the construction of the current building, excepting any possible habitation pre-dating existing records. Archaeological deposits contemporary to the construction and use of the farmhouse may remain in proximity to the Site, providing a degree of archaeological interest.

6.5 The Saxon origin of the village provides the land surrounding the cottage with a higher degree of below-ground archaeological potential, with C10-C12 pottery sherds found in the subsoil of a neighbouring property (HER No: 10921). Therefore, whilst the building does not hold extensive archaeological

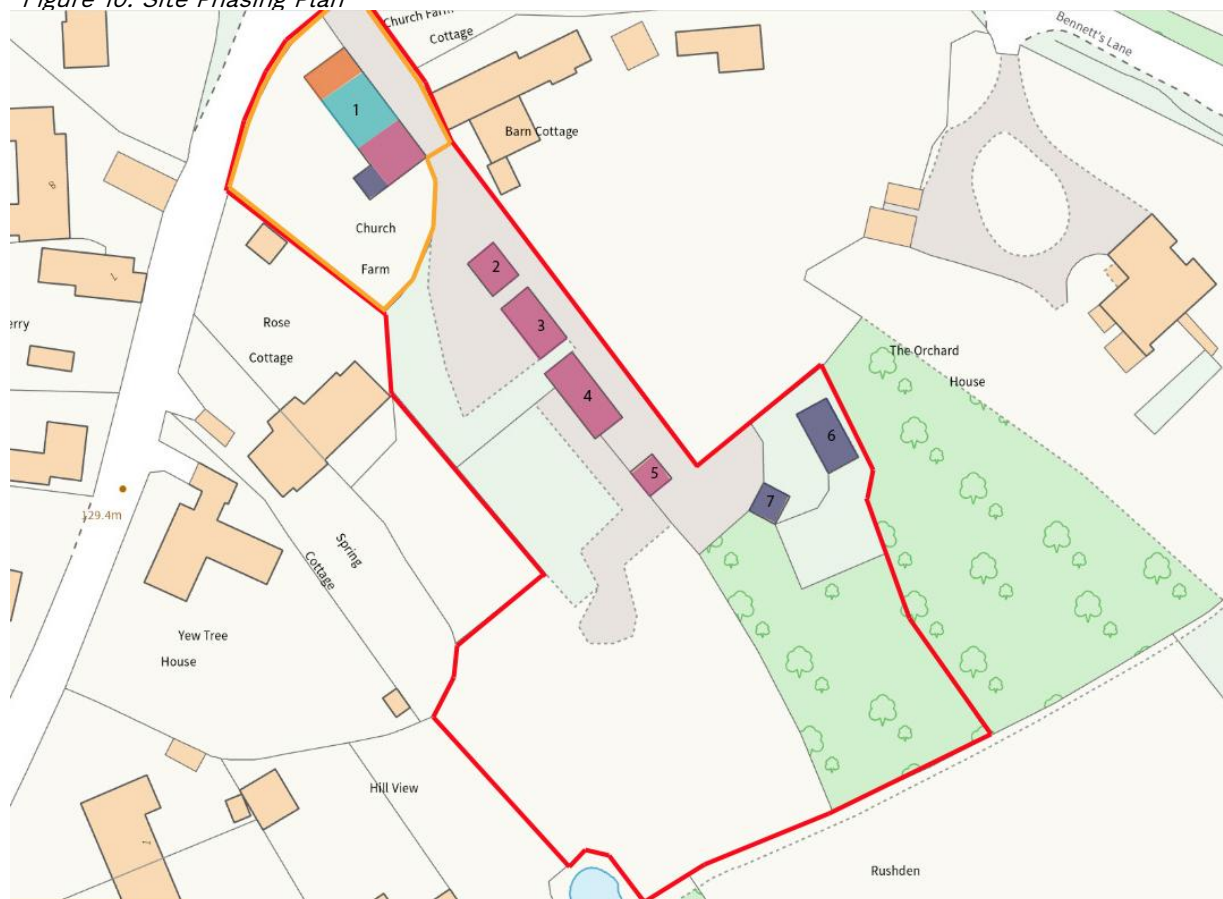
interest itself, the land surrounding the farmhouse could potentially be of interest.

- 6.6 A full archaeological desk-based assessment is beyond the remit of this report, and further investigations may be required to satisfy paragraph. 207 of the NPPF.

Architectural and Artistic Interest

- 6.7 The buildings across the Site hold varying architectural interest, based on their date of construction. Figure 10 details the development of the Site.

Figure 10: Site Phasing Plan



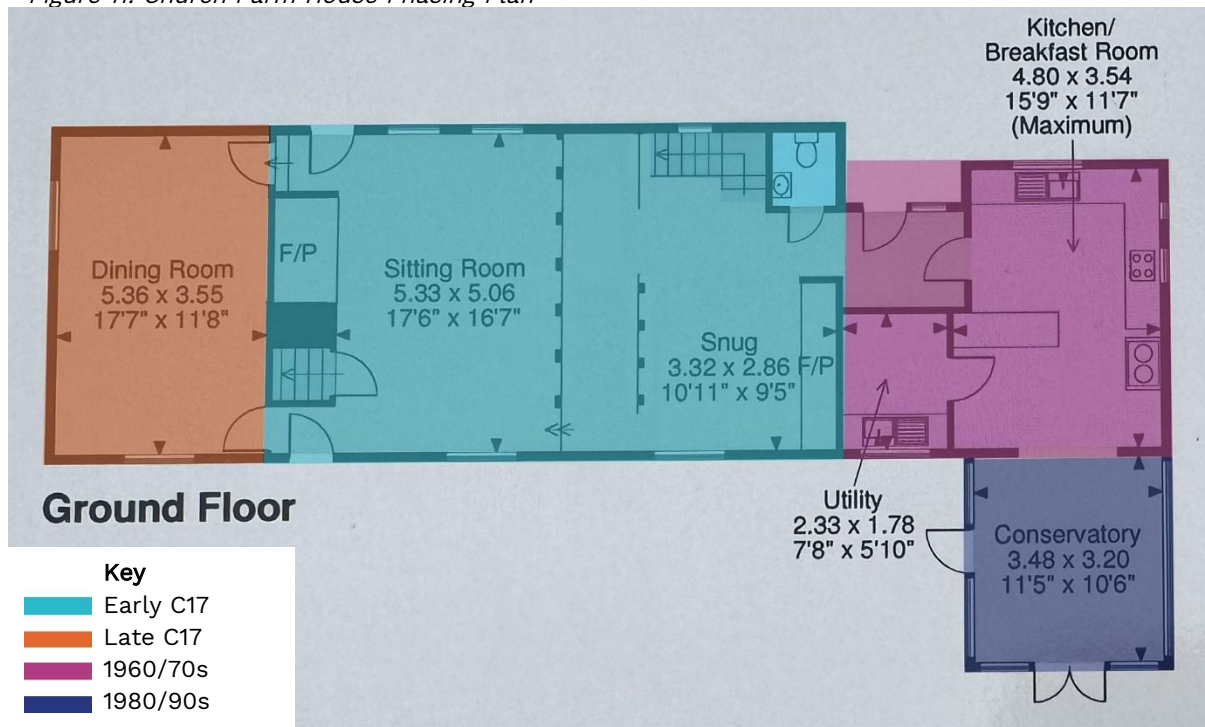
Schedule of buildings

1. Farmhouse: early C17 central core, late C17 extension, 1970s extension and conservatory approved in 1980s.
2. Tack store: 1970s
3. Store: 1970s. Since converted to garage and gym
4. Store: 1970s. Since converted to office.
5. Store: 1970s. Retained as a wood store
6. Stables: 1990s.
7. Stables: 1990s.

Key

	Site Boundary
	Domestic Curtilage
	Early C17
	Late C17
	1960/70s
	1980/90s

Figure 11: Church Farm House Phasing Plan



6.8 The farmhouse (*Figure 10: Building 1*) is the building of greatest architectural interest on the Site, designated for its contribution to the national understanding of vernacular architecture. The central core was constructed during the early C17, with the timber frame of the building remaining evident both inside and out. The central core of the building consisted of a timber-framed two-bay dwelling with a central passage, distinguished by exposed timber posts, and two end fireplace ranges. An external brick-built bread oven also adjoins the southern fireplace range. This central core of the building holds the greatest architectural interest as the original dwelling.

Figure 12: Interior of Central Bays of Church House Farm



Figure 13: Fireplace range on south end of central bay, with bread oven door lined to external bread oven



- 6.9 The timber frame addition to the north of the dwelling added a third bay to the house. The timber frame design indicates that this was likely to have been a late C17 addition, with its lack of fireplace indicating it may have initially been used for animal husbandry. The room has long been used as part of the house, and adds to the architectural interest of the dwelling.

Figure 14: Interior of late C17 north bay



- 6.10 A single-storey extension, likely added during the C19, previously formed the southernmost bay. This was replaced in 2020 by a two-storey extension in line with the rest of the dwelling. Whilst this kitchen extension does continue the character of the rest of the cottage, it does not hold any historic fabric. Timber beams used in the kitchen, which imitate those on the north bay, are plastic dressings painted to imitate timber framing. Equally, the gable end chimney stack is not connected to any fireplace and is a purely decorative feature. Therefore, the south end of the building holds no heritage architectural interest.

Figure 15: West Elevation with 1960's extension and 2020 single storey extension/conservatory



- 6.11 Finally, the conservatory extension, approved in 1992, has since been replaced on a like-for-like basis in scale and footprint, albeit unauthorised. This is situated on the same footprint as the former conservatory and does not contribute to the historic fabric of the building. Therefore, the most architecturally significant areas of the building are within the centre and north end of the dwelling, with the south end of the dwelling holding no heritage architectural interest.
- 6.12 Regarding the buildings across the rest of the Site, buildings 2-5 (*Figure 10: Phasing Plan*) are breeze block-built stores and tack rooms added during the 1970s. These buildings, built after 1948 and beyond the boundary of the houses' domestic curtilage at the time of listing, are not afforded the same listed building status as the Church Farm House. These buildings hold no heritage architectural merit in their own right.

Figure 16: Timber-clad Stores 3, 4 and 5.



Figure 16: Stables 6. Breezeblock with timber cladding



- 6.13 Finally, the stable buildings 6-7 to the southeast of the Site (*Figure 10: Phasing Plan*) were added to the area formerly used for equine purposes in the 1990s. The stables are breeze block built with timber cladding and hold no architectural interest.

Historic Interest

- 6.14 The Site's historic interest centres around its historical development in association with the Church. The small holding's development, stemming from the C17 vicar's desire to provide for his sister, provides a better understanding of Church Farm House's origin and its position at the core of the village. The farm continued to be central in Rushden's development, with the farm's agricultural land enclosing the village on all sides. Finally, the house's separation from the farm in the 1980s is in line with national agricultural trends, as agricultural smallholdings were sold off, particularly developed into residential use and the rest amalgamated into other larger agricultural holdings. As a result, the Site holds high historic interest for its contribution to the village's historic development.

Rushden Conservation Area

- 6.15 The Site makes a positive contribution to the Rushden Conservation Area. Church Farm House is a good example of an early C17 timber frame dwelling, with its exposed timber frame on its east elevation adding to the understanding of the building's development, and therefore the village's early growth. The House holds many features which are characteristic of the conservation area, including its thatched roof and dormer windows.
- 6.16 These features add to the appreciation of the village's character, particularly when viewed from Key View 1, looking south from the church, identified in the Conservation Area Character Statement 2019. The House is screened from view its westerly approach along Bennett's lane by foliage and tree. The development of the barns on the east side also limits the house's visibility when viewed from the west. Therefore, the house makes the greatest contribution to the village when viewed in proximity and from the Church.

- 6.17 The other buildings to the rear of the house are not visible from any publicly accessible areas within the conservation area. The breezeblock, timber-clad store buildings and stables are neutral feature within the area, neither making a particularly positive nor negative contribution to the otherwise rural historic character of the conservation area.

Figure 17: Key View 1: looking south from the Church. Identified in the Conservation Area Character Statement 2019



7. Heritage Impact Assessment

- 6.1 The National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG), helps to define what constitutes harm and how to assess the impact. It explains that:

'It is the degree of harms to the asset's significance rather than the scale of the development that is to be assessed. The harm may arise from works to the asset or from development within its setting.'

- 6.2 National guidance for identifying heritage values is set out in Historic England's Conservation Principles, 2008. A revised draft was consulted on in 2017 incorporating amended definitions of these 'values' to reflect the terminology adopted in the NPPF. Both versions of the document are therefore referred to.

- 6.3 Annex 2 of the Framework defines setting 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."

- 6.4 This is usually more extensive than its curtilage and can extend further than just visual considerations although this plays a vital part. The importance of views may contribute to the understanding of the significance of the heritage asset.

- 6.5 In addition, other factors which contribute to the heritage assets 'setting' include *"...noise, dust and vibration from other land uses in the vicinity..."* These environmental factors may influence qualitative attributes to the setting which may contribute either positively or negatively to its significance and subsequent appreciation.

- 6.6 Setting is not fixed and will change over time; therefore, cumulative change should be taken into consideration. Where the significance of an asset has been compromised *"...consideration still needs to be given to whether*

additional change will further detract from, or can enhance, the significance of the asset”.

6.7 The PPG clarifies the levels of harm which can arise from direct physical and indirect impact⁸. If there is no impact on the heritage asset’s significance or the development will enhance its significance, there will be no harm:

- Substantial harm or total loss - this would be harm that would *“have such a serious impact on the significance of the asset that its significance was either vitiated altogether or very much reduced”*⁹
- Less than substantial harm – harm of a lesser degree than substantial
- No harm - case law¹⁰ provides us with the articulation of ‘preserving’ which means doing ‘no harm’ with regards the Section 66(1) Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

6.8 Established case law has determined that:

*“Statutorily... preserving the character or appearance of an area is achieved either by a positive contribution to preservation or by development which leaves the character or appearance unharmed, that is to say preserved.”*¹¹

6.9 The term ‘preserving’ does not constitute ‘no change’ as Historic England guidance¹² confirms *“change to heritage assets is inevitable but it is only harmful when significance is damaged”*. Thus, the concept of change is accepted as part of the evolution of the historic environment. However, it is

⁸ MHCLG, Planning Practice Guidance, Paragraph: 018 (ID: 18a-039-20190723 Revision date: 23.07.2019)

⁹ EWHC 2847, R DCLG and Nuon UK Ltd v. Bedford Borough Council

¹⁰ EWHC 1895, R (Forge Field Society, Barraud and Rees) v. Sevenoaks DC, West Kent Housing Association and Viscount De L’Isle

¹¹ South Lakeland v Secretary of State for the Environment [1992] 2 AC 141

¹² Historic England, 2017, *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition): The Setting of Heritage Assets*

whether the change is therefore neutral, harmful, or beneficial to the significance which is to be determined.

- 6.10 Whilst the statutory duty requires that special regard should be paid to the desirability of not harming the setting of a listed building, that cannot mean that any harm, however minor, would necessarily require planning permission to be refused as clarified in the Court of Appeal¹³.
- 6.11 These are judgements, and the level of harm for the decision-maker should be clearly defined. The PPG states that: *“it is the harm to the asset’s significance rather than the scale of development that is to be assessed.”*¹⁴
- 6.12 The existing extension is a later 2020 addition which is of no significance therefore its removal will not result in any loss of any historic fabric and consequently does not give rise to direct harm to the designated heritage asset.
- 6.13 The proposed location of the extension echoes the historic development of the building and seeks to utilise the existing footprint rather than adding a further extension elsewhere. This mitigates any indirect harm to the conservation area by siting the replacement extension in a location that is already screened by existing hedgerow and set back from the road which has intervisibility with the church.
- 6.14 Furthermore, the replacement extension is not visible from key views identified in the Conservation Area Character Statement (Fig. 17) with the proposed sedum roof which has been designed to mitigate any short-range, glimpsed views of the extension (Fig. 18) which are already present at the moment and therefore enhance the experience.
- 6.15 The building itself has had several phases as described previously on which the proposed extension is attached to the later phase – being itself a 2020

¹³ Palmer v Herefordshire Council & Anor [2016] EWCA Civ 1061 (04 November 2016)

¹⁴ MHCLG, Planning Practice Guidance, Paragraph: 018 Reference ID: 18a-018-20190723

extension to the historic core of the building - and therefore has more capacity to change.

- 6.16 The building has been designed to sit in the landscape and work with the topography of the garden with low eaves on the south elevation reflecting the low and intimate eaves that is characteristic of the thatched roof. This will ensure that the stretch of glazing is not overbearing as it the height will be reduced sitting in line with the ground floor window.
- 6.17 The roof itself is proposed to be a sedum roof and reflects the thatched roof in a contemporary way. There is a small glass link sitting beneath the overhang of the thatched eaves which is a sensitive detail that has been considered in comparison to the existing box design that immediately abuts the building and sits at odds with the historic form being read as more bulky mass.
- 6.18 Furthermore, the small, glazed link will enable a clearer legibility between the linear house, albeit in differing phases and the much more obviously contemporary form that sits perpendicular.
- 6.19 The black powder coated aluminium frame with timber soffits of the proposed extension has taken cues from the historic black timber framing that is prominent on the east elevation and offers slimmer sections and profiles than the current timber frame of the extension which adds to its visible weighty appearance.
- 6.20 Aside from its relatively poor construction in respect of heat loss and overheating, the design approach to the current extension is considerably domestic in form and fenestration pattern and other than the use of timber it is of no real architectural merit.
- 6.21 Instead, the replacement extension will offer an open plan dining space and living room to enjoy the garden in a lighter glazed space which the house does not offer due to its historic nature. Furthermore, the extension presents an opportunity to provide an informal home-working space for the applicants who run their own business.

- 6.22 The replacement extension will enable the applicants to live a modern and every changing lifestyle in an historic house retaining its historic features and upgrading an architecturally poor extension.



Figure 18: Short distance views showing glimpsed views of existing extension to be mitigated by sedum roof



8. Conclusion

7.1 Paragraph 212 of the NPPF states that:

“When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be).”

8.2 Church Farm House is a Grade II listed heritage asset, dating to the early C17, with its history entwined with the village’s development. The house also contributes to the character of the Rushden Conservation Area, providing a focal point for views from the church having originally been built for the vicar’s sister.

8.3 Architecturally, the house is also of significance. The development of the building, with its early C17 core and late C17 extension, which was likely to have held livestock, provides information about the architectural developments and priorities of design during the village’s earlier periods. The building was quickly adapted to a more vernacular design and in keeping with the daily hands-on running of a small holding.

8.4 The principal issue for the consideration of the proposal is whether the designated heritage assets – both the listed building and the conservation area will become less significant should the application be approved. If not, then there is evidently no harm, by a process of logic.

8.5 Latterly the building’s significance has been reduced due to C20 extension and now 2020 unauthorised replacement extension which do not contribute to its historic interest. This least significant part of the building is the location of the replacement extension and results in no direct harm due to the loss of no historic fabric to the designated heritage asset. It is therefore concluded that the development will lead to *no harm* to the significance of Church House Farm as a designated heritage asset.

8.6 Due to the location of the extension being in the same place as the existing (at the rear) which is screened by existing vegetation that mitigate views from

the conservation area and does not impact key view 1 as highlighted in the conservation area appraisal. Furthermore, the introducing of a sedum roof will obscure even any glimpsed views therefore if the conservation area will be preserved and enhanced resulting in *no harm* arising from the proposed development to the Rushden Conservation Area.