
**Highover Farm, Highover Way, Hitchin, Hertfordshire
HG4 0QR**

**Heritage statement: assessment of significance in
respect of application for listed building consent for
conversion of threshing barn to two separate
residential dwellings**

May 2025

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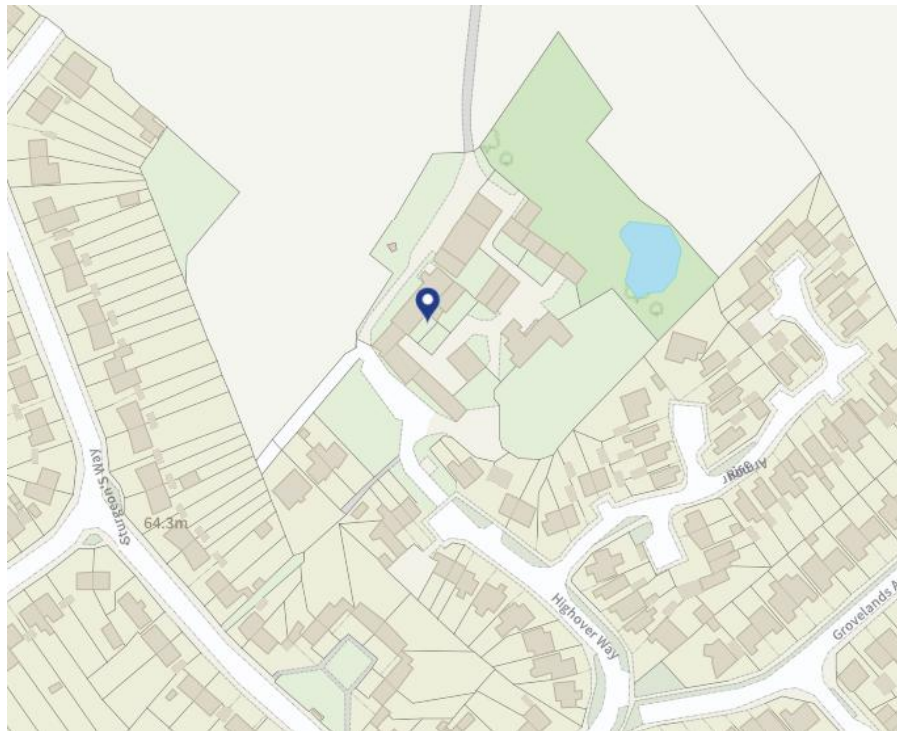
1.0 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

1. This application for listed building consent accompanies an application for planning permission for the residential change of use of the former farm at Highover Way. We refer to our planning supporting statement for reference as to the nature of the scheme and the background and the mainstay of the planning policy context.
2. This report concerns the designated heritage asset directly and the surrounding non-designated heritage assets (NDHA).
3. We introduce the scheme, the nature and extent of the designated and non-designated heritage assets, present the map regression research and conclude with our assessment as to the impact of the proposal upon the significance of the heritage assets.
4. The scheme (which is the subject of this particular submission) concerns the listed threshing barn and the adjoining former store. The threshing barn is the only statutorily listed structure on the site: the majority of the remaining buildings are non-designated heritage assets (NDHA).
5. The threshing barn is vacant and we shall outline its condition within this statement.
6. The overall proposal for the site, as a totality, is described as follows:

“Change of use of former agricultural buildings comprising statutorily listed threshing barn and non-listed (non-designated heritage asset) courtyard buildings, former farmhouse together with the addition of 2 new build dwellings and the adaption of pre-existing courtyard buildings to provide cycle and refuse storage, partial demolition of non-listed structure to facilitate access, provision of private and communal space and BNG area”

The heritage asset

7. The threshing barn was listed in 2018 as Grade II and an extract from the Historic England website, with the arrow notation, and associated text is as follows:



Summary

Threshing barn, constructed in the late C16 or early C17, and extended in the C18.

Reasons for Designation

The threshing barn at Highover Farm, built in the late C16 or early C17, and extended in the C18, is listed at Grade II for the following principal reasons:

Architectural interest: * as a well-preserved example of a late-C16 or early-C17 timber-framed threshing barn; * for the legibility of the

original plan form of the threshing barn; * for the survival of a high proportion of the original queen-post roof structure, timber-framing, and flint and brick wall construction. Historic interest: * as a key surviving example of English agricultural and tenurial practice, exhibiting the agricultural prosperity of Highover Farm in the late C16 or early C17.

History

Highover Farm most likely has its origins as a medieval farmstead, and was first documented between 1287 and 1294 (Gover, Mawer & Stenton, 1938). A deed of 1438 refers to tenements, lands, pastures and meadows with hedges and ditches in the hamlet of Highover which were sold by John Poydras of Almshoe to John Pulter and Nicholas Mattok of Hitchin and Thomas Pulter, a canon of St Paul's Cathedral. Manorial accounts of 1460 mention a messuage and a cottage at Highover in addition to John Pulter's property there. An inquisition post-mortem for 1488 refers to Highover as a manor, reflecting the wealth of the Pulter family as wool merchants. In 1556 Edward Pulter is recorded as owning the farm called Highover with 20 acres of land for which he paid the lord of the manor 2lb of pepper a year as well as a monetary rent. Pulter was also recorded as owning a copyhold tenement and cottage at Highover, and by 1676 these cottages had been absorbed into Highover Farm. The Pulter family did not live at Highover; for much of the C15 and early C16 they resided in the parsonage in Hitchin (now the site of Churchgate) which they leased from Elstow Abbey.

In 1690, Highover farmhouse with its out buildings, barns, stables, 400 acres of land and 36 acres of pasture in the parishes of Hitchin and Great Wymondley were leased to William Maling. In the 1750s Pulter Forester was required to sell some of the family's estates, and his son William sold Highover and his other property in Walsworth to the Reverend Thomas Whitehurst in 1766. Whitehurst obtained an Act of Parliament to enclose the open fields of Walsworth, and commissioned Thomas Bateman to map his estates in Walsworth in 1767 and Ickleford in 1771. The 1767 map shows a simpler but similar layout to what currently survives at Highover Farm, with the

irregular form of the medieval farmstead, orchard and pond, surrounded by the straight lines of the new enclosures. By the 1780s Whitehurst was in serious financial difficulties; in 1783 and 1786 he mortgaged parts of his Walsworth estate, and in 1791 the Walsworth estate was auctioned to repay his mortgages and debts. The sales particulars described the estate as 'three eligible farms' with 605 acres of rich, arable land, meadow and pasture 'in a beautiful and Sporting Part of the Country within One Mile of Hitchin (being one of the first Markets in the Kingdom)' and 'near a navigable River, which is expected to be continued through Part of the Estate'. Whitehurst's Walsworth estate was sold in 1803, and again in 1822.

The farmstead is shown on the 1844 tithe map as 'High-Over Farm', with the L-plan farmhouse at the south-east side of a rectangular-plan farmyard, stables and hay barn at the south-west side, threshing barn and attached farm building at the north-west side, and an L-plan farm building at the north-east side. A report on Mr Wilshire's land at Walsworth in 1861 stated that 'Highover Farm has a very fair Homestead and a good House which is conveniently placed, but the land although of good quality has been very much neglected'. The following year Highover Farm (then with 420 acres) was let to Richard Pedder who was recorded in 1881 as farming 422 acres, employing 14 men and 10 boys, and having two resident female servants. The 1881 Ordnance Survey (OS) map shows the farmstead with the same layout as the 1844 tithe map, with the exception that a store was added to the north-west corner between the hay barn and threshing barn; the building formerly attached to the north-east side of the threshing barn was replaced by a detached range of cart sheds; and the building to the north-east side of the farmyard was replaced by a linear range of cattle sheds. The layout of these buildings has not changed since the publication of the 1881 OS map, save the addition of a small number of farm buildings to the interior of the farmyard. Alterations were carried out to the front elevation of the farmhouse about 1890, and a perpendicular two-storey extension was added to the north-east corner of the farmhouse around 1910.

It is likely that the threshing barn at Highover Farm was constructed in the late C16 or early C17. The barn for storing and threshing corn was one of the most important and impressive buildings on a farm and usually the largest. Large farms and estates benefited from the great land sales that followed the dissolution of the monasteries in the 1530s to 1540s, and the resultant increase of average farm sizes, particularly in the most capital-intensive arable areas, was accompanied by a general increase in agricultural incomes and productivity. The period between 1770 and 1870 was the most significant phase of farm building development throughout England. Rising grain prices from the 1760s into the early C19, and the impact of agricultural improvement, brought about a significant change in the extent of arable production in the east of England, accompanied by further investment in farm buildings of all types – not only barns, but also stables, granaries and buildings and enclosures for livestock. The traditional threshing barn plan, comprising a threshing floor with opposing doors and flanking storage bays, remained comparatively unaltered between the C12 and early C19, although the gradual demise of large, cross-ventilated threshing bays followed the advent of the threshing machine in the late C18. There is marked regional variation throughout the country, and in the arable areas of the south and east of England, threshing barns could be large, sometimes aisled, and were commonly built in groups to provide shelter to cattle yards. It is possible that the large threshing barn at Highover Farm was constructed as a semi-aisled barn, but more likely that the north-west aisle was added in the C18 (as evidenced by the red brick extensions to the flint gable walls).

Details

Threshing barn, constructed in the late C16 or early C17, and extended in the C18.

MATERIALS: the threshing barn is timber-framed with weatherboard cladding over a flint plinth, having red brick infill laid in Flemish bond, and a slate roof covering.

PLAN: T-shaped in plan, comprising a rectangular-plan barn laid out on a south-west to north-east axis, with a porch projecting from the centre of the south-east elevation, and an aisle to the north-west side, most likely added in the C18.

EXTERIOR: the threshing barn has a steeply-pitched roof with a slate roof covering, plain bargeboards at the gable ends, and catslide roofs over the north-west aisle and south-east shelters. The timber-framed structure has weatherboard cladding over a flint plinth, having red-brick infill to the corners and some rebuilding to parts, including the western ends of the gable walls where it appears the north-west aisle may have been added in the C18. The gabled porch to the centre of the south-east elevation has double-leaf plank doors with strap hinges opening externally, under a jettied gable supported by knee braces. Outshot shelters were added to either side of the porch in the mid-C19, each having three timber posts supporting a slate roof (the south roof has collapsed entirely). The north-west elevation has double-leaf plank doors opening internally, directly opposite the porch of the south-east elevation.

INTERIOR: the interior is formed of seven bays, the central bay of which retains a cobbled threshing floor. The queen-post roof structure has clasped purlins, with diagonal bracing to the principal rafters, each of which were numbered by the carpenter. The tie beams have knee braces to the principal posts, the majority of which in turn have diagonal braces to the wall plate. The collar beams are at bay and half-bay intervals. The south-east wall appears to retain a high proportion of its original timber posts, studs and diagonal braces over an original flint plinth wall. The timber posts of the former north-west wall now stand on red-brick plinths. The north-west aisle (most likely added in the C18) has aisle tie beams bolted to the north-west principal posts, and knee braces to the north-west wall, which has closely-spaced studs and some diagonal braces. The gable walls retain a high proportion of their original flint construction, while their western ends have been rebuilt in brick, possibly when the north-west aisle was added in the C18. Parts of the north-west wall and porch have been repaired with red brick over various periods.

8. There are no other listed buildings on the farm complex or, indeed, within the local context.
9. We also clarify that the site is not within a conservation area nor within the setting of one.
10. We make the point that the appraisal in 2018 by Historic England was the opportunity to add anything else of merit to the statutory list but it clearly declined to do so.
11. The remaining structures are all locally listed and are within the setting of the heritage asset and so are classified as NDHAs.
12. We refer to the North Hertfordshire District Council Register of **Buildings of Local Interest published in July, 2011** and the specific document which covers Hitchin.
13. The site appears on page 14 in the following form and we have also reproduced the text for clarity as follows:

Highover Farm	Highover Way	Highover, as a distinct location, is first mentioned in 1287. C16 to C18 evidence underlines Highover's importance within Walsworth and its association with a key Hitchin wool-merchant family, the Pulters. The farmhouse is probably one of the oldest surviving buildings in Walsworth, with documentary reference to 1599 and has long been substantial (e.g. 5 hearths in 1663); although altered and partly re-fronted in brick c1890 it contains much earlier timber framed structures within. Timber barns, possibly C17, to the west whilst C19 red brick single-storey buildings form the remainder of the farmyard enclosure. Also connections with another key Hitchin family of the C18 and C19, the Wilsheres. Overall a very important and long evolved complex of agricultural buildings and surrounding landscape.	
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14. The image is of the southern elevation of the former farmhouse.

15. We therefore confirm that the site comprises in heritage terms the following:

- **The statutorily listed threshing barn (grade II);**
- **The mid to late 19th century cattle sheds to the north of the threshing barn: in close proximity but not attached;**
- **The mid to late 19th century cattle sheds and more recently repurposed as a piggery, namely the built form on the northern part of the site;**
- **The former farmhouse;**
- **The hay barn, namely the southernmost building and that nearest the site entrance;**
- **The small store adjoining the threshing barn and to be adapted to provide the main entrance and one of the ground floor bedrooms to one of the units as part of the threshing barn conversion;**
- **The 2 lesser quality and later 20th century structures within the courtyard.**

16. We now present the history and map progression.

17. Hitchin is one of the oldest continuously inhabited towns in Hertfordshire, with origins dating back to the late Roman period. The town gained prominence during Saxon times as a significant ecclesiastical and royal estate. By the Norman Conquest, Hitchin was a key royal manor, as recorded in the Domesday Book. Over the medieval period, it grew into a prosperous market town, bolstered by trades such as grain, wool, cloth-making, and tanning. Despite setbacks like the Black Death, Hitchin's economic and religious institutions thrived, with establishments like Hitchin Priory and the Biggin Monastery.
18. During the Tudor and Stuart periods, Hitchin remained a prominent settlement, though religious upheaval from the Dissolution of the Monasteries and the English Reformation brought significant changes. The Priory and Gilbertine monastery were abolished, but new charities and institutions emerged, solidifying Hitchin's role as a civic centre. The town's economy continued to grow through malting, brewing, and farming, with Hitchin becoming well-known for its barley malt. The town maintained its significance during the English Civil War, contributing to the Parliamentary cause, and developed a strong Non-Conformist influence that persisted into the 18th century. By the 19th and 20th centuries, Hitchin evolved into a typical market town, benefiting from improvements in agriculture, communications, and industry. The arrival of the railway in 1850 spurred further economic growth, especially in grain, malt production, and engineering.
19. Though the town faced challenges during periods of industrial decline and war, Hitchin adapted by focusing on small-scale industries and maintaining its commercial and retail significance. Today, Hitchin retains its historical character while evolving to meet modern needs.
20. Highover Farm is situated in the north-east corner of Hitchin and operated as a working farm from the medieval period until 2022.
21. While 20th century development has encroached on the farm from the south and west, remnants of the agricultural landscape to the north have been preserved.
22. Highover Farm originated as a medieval farmstead, with its earliest documentation appearing between 1287 and 1294. By 1438, the farm was noted for its tenements, lands, pastures, and meadows, which were sold by John Poydras to notable figures including John Pulter, a canon of St Paul's Cathedral. The Pulter

family, known for their wealth as wool merchants, significantly influenced the farm's development.

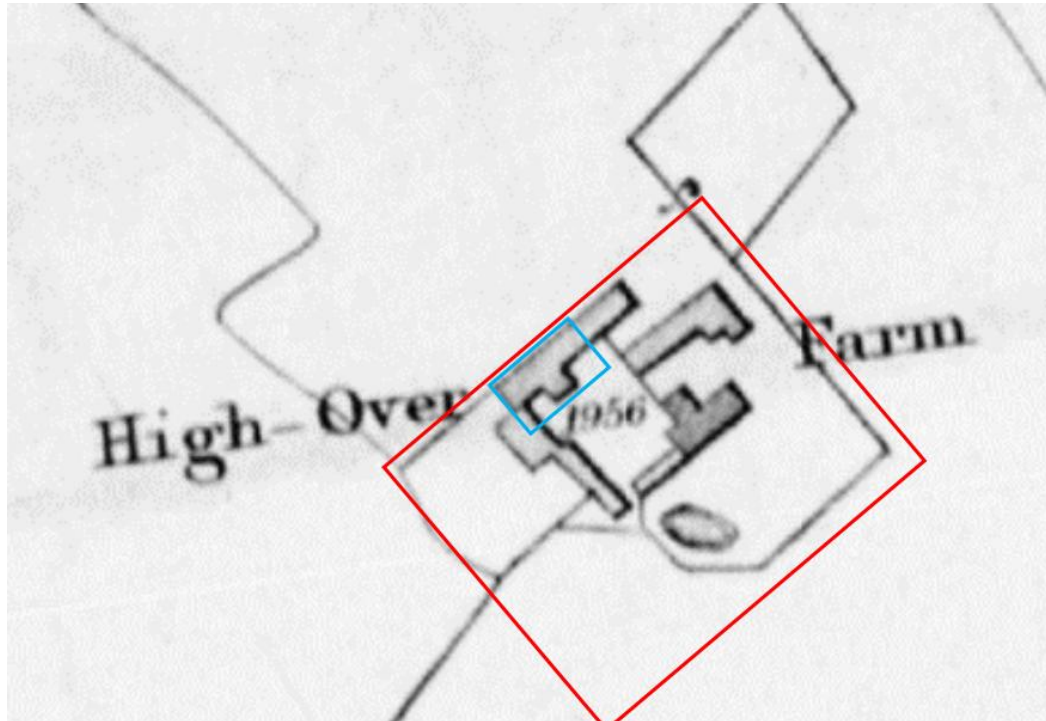
23. In 1556, Edward Pulter owned the farm with 20 acres of land, paying rent in pepper and money. By 1676, cottages at Highover had been integrated into the farm, though the Pulters resided elsewhere in Hitchin
24. In 1690, Highover Farm included a farmhouse, outbuildings, barns, stables, and 400 acres of land in Hitchin and Great Wymondley. The farm changed hands in the 1750s when Pulter Forester sold it to Reverend Thomas Whitehurst in 1766. Whitehurst commissioned the enclosure of open fields in Walsworth, and his 1767 map showed a layout similar to what survives today, with medieval farmstead features surrounded by new enclosures. Financial difficulties led to the sale of Whitehurst's estate in 1803 and 1822

Map regression

1804 – the farm and context (our red and blue notations added throughout)

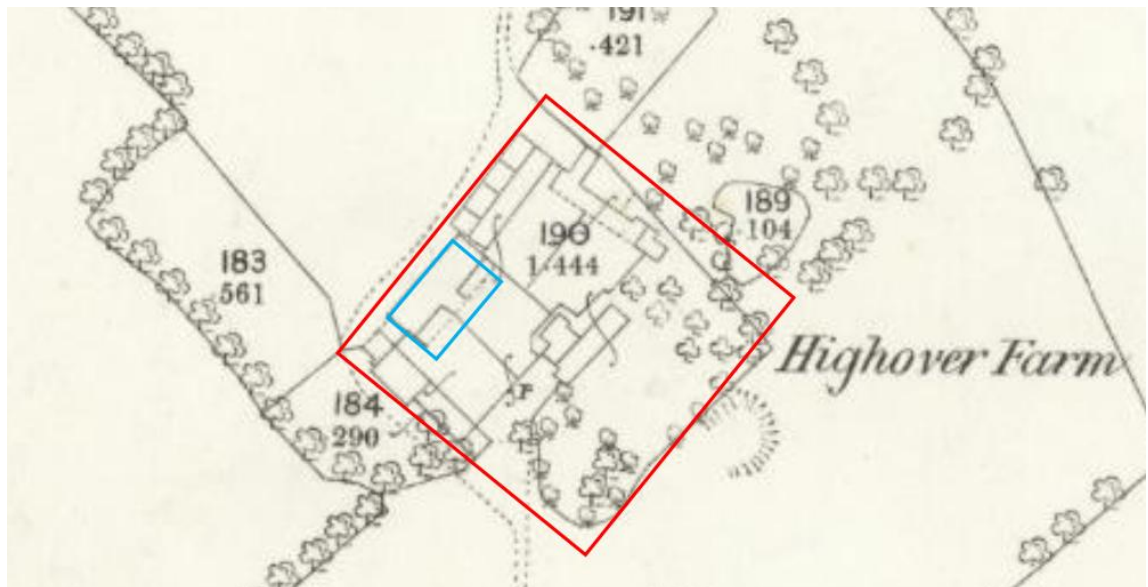


1841 – Tithe map: red edge to site, threshing barn highlighted in blue

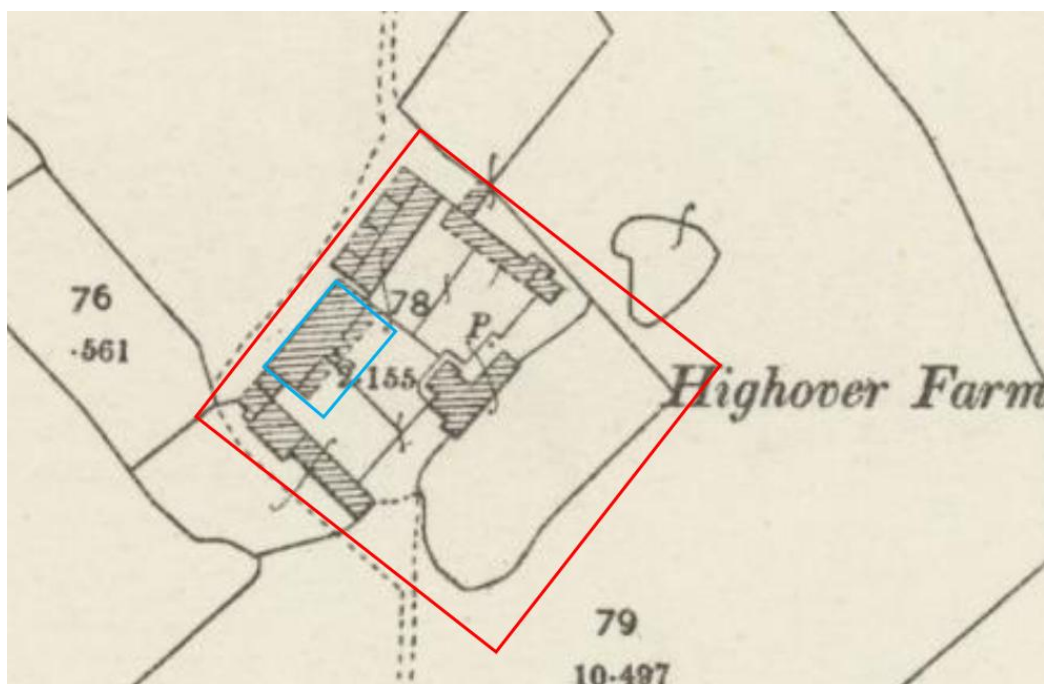


1879-81 – OS map below

25. We note that by 1844 Highover Farm was recorded on the Tithe map as "High-Over Farm" with an L-plan farmhouse along with stables, a hay barn, the threshing barn and the formation of the rectangular yard.

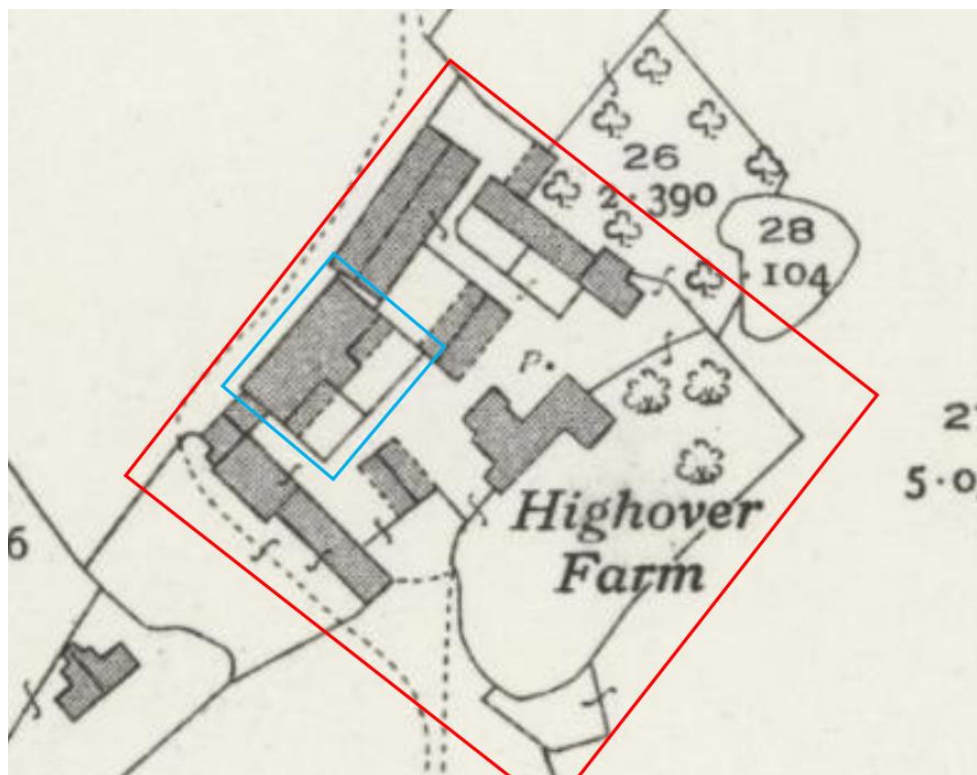


1898 – OS extract: form of site evident, farmhouse yet to be extended with its rear wing



OS 1939 published 1947

26. The threshing barn at Highover Farm, likely built in the late 16th or early 17th century, was a key structure for grain storage and processing. It reflected the larger land sales following the dissolution of the monasteries and the subsequent rise in agricultural productivity. The barn's traditional design, featuring a threshing floor with opposing doors and flanking storage bays, remained relatively unaltered until the late 18th century. The addition of a north-west aisle and brick extensions to the flint gable walls in the 18th century indicates regional variations and evolving agricultural practices.



OS 1965



Google Earth 2000: two separate images from this date:



Planning policy

27. The relevant policy context and guidance in respect of this matter are as follows:

Policy SP13: Historic environment

The Council will balance the need for growth with the proper protection and enhancement of the historic environment. When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight will be given to the asset's conservation and the management of its setting. We will pursue a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment through:

- a) Maintaining a strong presumption in favour of the retention, preservation and enhancement of heritage assets and their setting according to their significance;**
- b) Identifying sites on the national register of Heritage at Risk or on the Council's 'At Risk' register;**
- c) Periodic reviews of Conservation Areas and other locally designated assets; and**
- d) Publication of detailed guidance**

28. The relevant extract from policy SP17, HT1 criterion (g) reads as follows:

g) Sensitive consideration of other designated and non-designated heritage assets at Highover Farm including the Grade II listed Threshing Barn;

29. In respect of national planning policy the NPPF, 2024 advises as follows at paragraph 203, quoted as relevant :

203. Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. This strategy should take into account:

d) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;

e) the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;

f) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and

g) opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place

30. In addition, paragraphs 207 and 208:

207. 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. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.

208. Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal

31. And, finally, paragraphs 214 and 215:

214. Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to

achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and

b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and

d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.

215. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

32. We have also had regard to the following documents:

- **Historic England 'Conservation Principles: Policies and Guidance';**
- **British Standard 7913 (2013) Guide to the 'Conservation of Historic Buildings';**
- **Guidance set out in Historic England advice notes**

33. In respect of our account of significance we rely upon the principles of evidential value, aesthetic value, historic value and communal value.

34. The threshing barn exhibits a good level of significance in heritage terms.

35. The threshing barn, constructed in the late 16th or early 17th century and later extended in the 18th century, is primarily timber-framed with weatherboard cladding over a flint plinth. It features red brick infill laid in Flemish bond and is topped with a steeply-pitched slate roof. The barn has a T-shaped layout, oriented on a southwest to northeast axis, with a central porch projecting from the southeast elevation and an aisle on the northwest side, likely added during the 18th century.
36. Distinctive architectural elements include plain bargeboards at the gable ends, catslide roofs over the aisle and shelters, and double-leaf plank doors at both the southeast porch and northwest elevation.
37. Internally, the barn consists of seven bays, with the central bay retaining a cobbled threshing floor.
38. The post roof structure features clasped purlins and diagonal bracing, with numbered principal rafters.
39. The south-east wall retains many original timber posts and diagonal braces over the original flint plinth wall. The former northwest wall now stands on red-brick plinths, while the northwest aisle has tie beams bolted to the principal posts. The gable walls maintain much of their original flint construction, although the western ends have been rebuilt in brick, likely when the aisle was added. Repairs with red brick have been made to parts of the northwest wall and porch over the years
40. Recent images below:

Courtyard elevation



Closer view: signs of neglect and dereliction



Rear elevation



Internal view central gable



Internal view facing north-west



And internal view in opposing direction.



41. In terms of the setting of the immediate context we conclude that:

- **The immediate setting makes a moderate to beneficial contribution to the significance of the heritage asset;**

- **The broader context will make a neutral to low contribution.**

42. We make this conclusion on the basis that the immediate farm complex is broadly intact and legible albeit currently vacant and in a progressive state of deterioration.
43. In terms of the broader context the open agricultural land to the north-west and north, which is no longer put to agricultural use but still retains the agricultural character, is now the subject of the outline approval and whilst there is a degree of separation with the threshing barn green associated with that scheme the broader context will change significantly.
44. The relationship of this context with the threshing barn and the land with which it was formerly associated will be lost in perpetuity.

The scheme

45. The scheme has been described in the planning statement and the small store building will be an entrance for unit 3 and the main gable projection will be the entrance for unit 4.
46. In essence the threshing barn will be subdivided into 2 separate dwellings with external changes as shown.
47. The residential use is the optimum viable use consistent with its conservation. The building is in a state of disrepair and shortly (whether under the terms of this application subject to timings or via an informal agreement with the local planning authority) the slates will need to be taken down and stored and plastic sheeting placed over the structure.
48. The need for an urgent solution is clear and is reflected in the images shown.
49. The barn has not been used for many years and it is understood that whilst the farm use ceased in 2022 it is not clear when the threshing barn was put to any meaningful agricultural operation at that point (or in recent times prior to that date).

50. The conversion of the threshing barn into residential will ensure its preservation and it is challenging to see how this could be achieved via any other means.
51. The overall form and layout of the building will be preserved and no extensions are proposed.
52. The existing openings will be used and inevitably there is a need for light for the residential use to be able to go ahead.
53. In respect of fenestration and on the inner side, namely the courtyard side, 7 new windows are proposed in the roof slope. All will be of the conservation style and informed by the submitted frame/condition survey. The pattern of fenestration is balanced, symmetrical as far as is possible and subsidiary to the overall roof form.
54. At lower level new windows are proposed to the staircase up to unit 3; the ground floor toilet and one of the bedrooms; on the other side of the projecting bay which will be fully glazed, 2 further windows provide light into the 2 bedrooms.
55. On the north-western side of the threshing barn a comparable pattern of fenestration is proposed and this is also aligned and consistent with that to units 5 to 8.
56. Internally the key points are as follows.
57. The accommodation is unconventional with ground floor sleeping and upper level living facilitated by the internal installation of a mezzanine as a separate internal structure.
58. The upper level is constrained by the roof slope and so a void is proposed allowing views down. With unit 3 the internal staircase enables the full height space to be appreciated.
59. All rooms work around the established bays to maintain an appreciation of the historical structure and some of the rooms, certainly the study to unit 3, are constrained by the structural supports to the barn which will remain untouched a key historical features.

60. The wall to demarcate units 3 from 4, and as agreed at pre application stage, is informed by the bay positions and unit 4 has an appreciation of the full extent of the threshing component of the barn which plays an important part in terms of letting light into the residential unit as well.
61. Stairs are proposed to one side with the glass balustrade walkway provided access to the upper level mezzanine space.
62. The use of glass will enable the appreciation of volume and height to be appreciated whilst the stairs are a necessity to provide access.
63. The method of construction has been the subject of discussion with the local planning authority and effectively in order to achieve the relevant insulation requirements for a residential conversion the building will effectively be wrapped externally with new insulation. The original slates will be taken off and replaced on top of the wrap structure and timber weatherboarding will be placed over the walls and a new brick plinth addition added at the bottom.
64. This approach will keep the internal fabric untouched and the exposed flintwork will be retained and all internal timberwork protected and untouched.
65. Any residential conversion will inevitably lead to a level of change and to some degree a level of harm which we assess cumulatively as less than substantial.
66. There will be a modest link from the store into the end of the threshing barn to enable unit 3 to function as a dwelling. Without this addition and associated connection required the unit will be too small to justify the expense of conversion and priority has been given to the retention of the open space of the threshing component which is attributed to unit 4.
67. The internal interventions in terms of the mezzanine do reduce the current full appreciation of the volume of the structure pursuant to the (former) agricultural use, however, mezzanines are an inevitable component of barn conversions and key areas of double height space are provided and protected not least in the threshing component.

68. The benefits are clear.
69. The threshing barn is in a state of disrepair and moving towards dereliction. It was not a part of the 2018 outline application and has not been picked up in the intervening 7 years until now.
70. Whilst the threshing barn is in private ownership and will be sold on as such it is nonetheless a public resource and any owner or occupant is merely a custodian for the time of their occupation.
71. Residential use is the highest value use and it justifies the initial investment required as well as ongoing occupation and upkeep.

The NDHA and the setting of the threshing barn

72. The NDHA are essentially kept in their current form and facilitated by 2 extensions, namely that to the former /re-purposed piggery to reflect the pre-existing rear extension to the building and the same approach has been adopted in relation to the farmhouse again reflecting the pre-existing rear wing.
73. All of the buildings are to be converted for residential use as part of a comprehensive development and will follow the agrarian aesthetic around the established courtyard layout.
74. The focus is on a simple and uncomplicated palette of materials and pattern of fenestration which reflects the interventions to the statutorily listed building.
75. The courtyard will be the subject of activity with residential comings and goings and it was once, we can safely assume, a busy farmhouse which was its purpose and genesis.
76. All the matters which could prejudice the legibility of the buildings and farmyard setting, and in this regard we are largely referring to domestic paraphernalia such as parked cars and clutter, are dealt with by design.

77. Pre-existing buildings are repurposed to provide car parking, cycle parking and refuse.
78. They cannot accommodate all of this requirements, not least car parking, but all other matters are dealt with discreetly. The inevitable car park is broken up into small sections facilitated by landscaping and refuse is stored close to the properties that they serve and only pulled out to allocated points on collection days.
79. Generally landscaping is provided to soften up the setting and the reuse of the buildings for residential purposes will ensure its continued upkeep and maintenance. Details of hard and soft landscaping are submitted at this early stage.
80. The historic evolution of the site is reflected in this iteration and the restoration of the courtyard and associated activity is part and parcel of the site's history.
81. Materials of construction will be consistent throughout all of the buildings and key materials such as brick, timber weatherboarding and slate tiles will draw together a consistency in architectural language.
82. The future of the site is ensured and the retention of the legibility of the courtyard leads us to conclude a modestly positive contribution.
83. Less than substantial harm will inevitably result via the introduction of domestic paraphernalia, however, this is counterbalanced by the public benefits of the restoration of the courtyard setting and the preservation and upkeep of the entire complex facilitated by the scheme.