



Heritage Asset Impact Assessment

Mill Barns,
High Street,
Whitwell,
HITCHIN
SG4 8AG

December 2025
HAIA_MDP_1944



MDP Architects
65 Hermitage Road,
Hitchin,
Hertfordshire,
SG5 1DB

1.0 INTRODUCTION

2.0 HISTORY & DEVELOPMENT

3.0 PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORDS

4.0 REVIEW & ASSESSMENT OF ASSOCIATED ASSETS

5.0 IMPACT OF PROPOSED WORKS ON SITE SPECIFIC ASSETS

This assessment has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of Paragraph 128 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which states:

"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."

1.0 | INTRODUCTION

This assessment has been prepared by MDP Architects to accompany an application for a barn conversion and extension to create a new two-bedroom dwelling with a new walled gated entrance within a conservation area. This assessment is intended to advise the LPA by providing a proportionate assessment of the significance of the building, the extent of any surviving original features in the areas to be affected, and the impact of the proposals on the building's significance, as well as identifying and assessing the impact on any heritage assets within reasonable proximity of the application site.

MDP Architects is an award-winning architectural practice established in May 2000, with extensive experience in works to ecclesiastical, listed and other historic buildings as well as private residential dwellings. The practice works regularly with historic buildings and their stakeholders, including the Church of England and the Dioceses of St Albans, Oxford and Peterborough, as well as Historic England and other advisory bodies including SPAB and the Victorian Society.

Where appropriate, relevant accessible historical records have been consulted and the results of this exercise included, including OS mapping data (where available) and HER results if applicable. These results were accurate as far as could be reasonably ascertained at the date of this report; checks should be made to confirm the accuracy of these results if relevant.

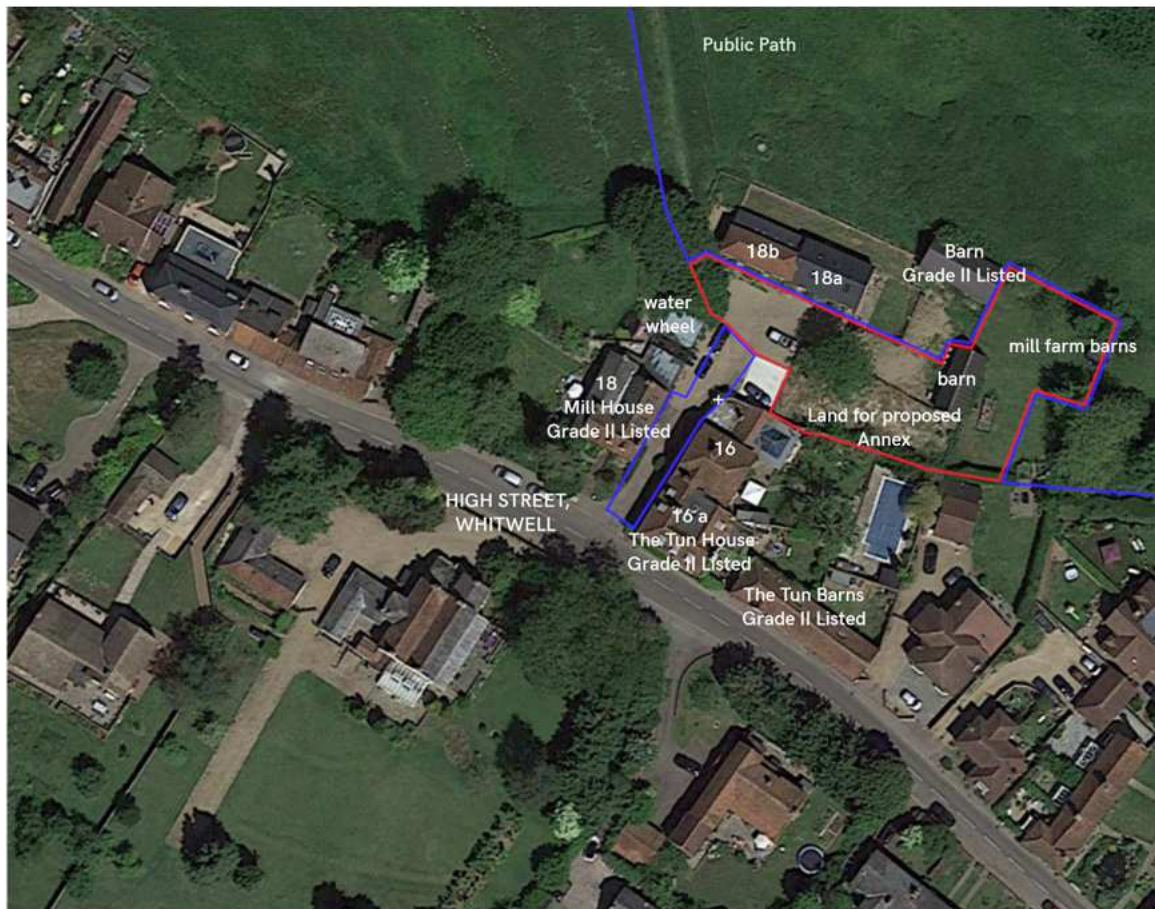
2.0 | HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT

The Mill Yard where the site is located is set back from the main high street via a slim access road to the south of the site. At the initial entrance to the access road three listed properties are sited; Number 18 (Mill House, Number 16A (The Tun House) and the Barn to the East of The Tun House C17-C18 construction.

The proposal site is located on the south eastern side of the Mill yard directly south of a listed barn. On the north of the site is the main river Mimram with a linked brook on the east side of the site.

To the east of the site is a fruit orchard and there is also believed to be small former chalk pit and tan yard as noted on the 1881 OS map. To the west the access road and public footpath.

Fig 1.



Google earth image with MDP mark-up - not to scale

As can be seen in fig.1, the proposal site is within a historic part of Whitwell village with a number of Grade II listed properties in the locality. The existing site is just south of a Grade II listed Barn in Former Mill Yard (Listed Entry: 1103261), believed to be late C16 or early C17. Timber frame on low brick sill, dark

weatherboarded and with a steeply pitched roof now corrugated iron. A low 3-bays barn facing south into the yard with double door opening in middle bay on south.

The listed barn to the rear of the site is shown on the map shown below (Fig.2) from 1881. The barn appears to have served the Tan Yard which was previously located to the east of the site. The courtyard shows a former building which enclosed the tan yard on the west side which no longer exists on site.

Although there have been some minor changes and development on the overall locality, predominantly the layout looks similar.

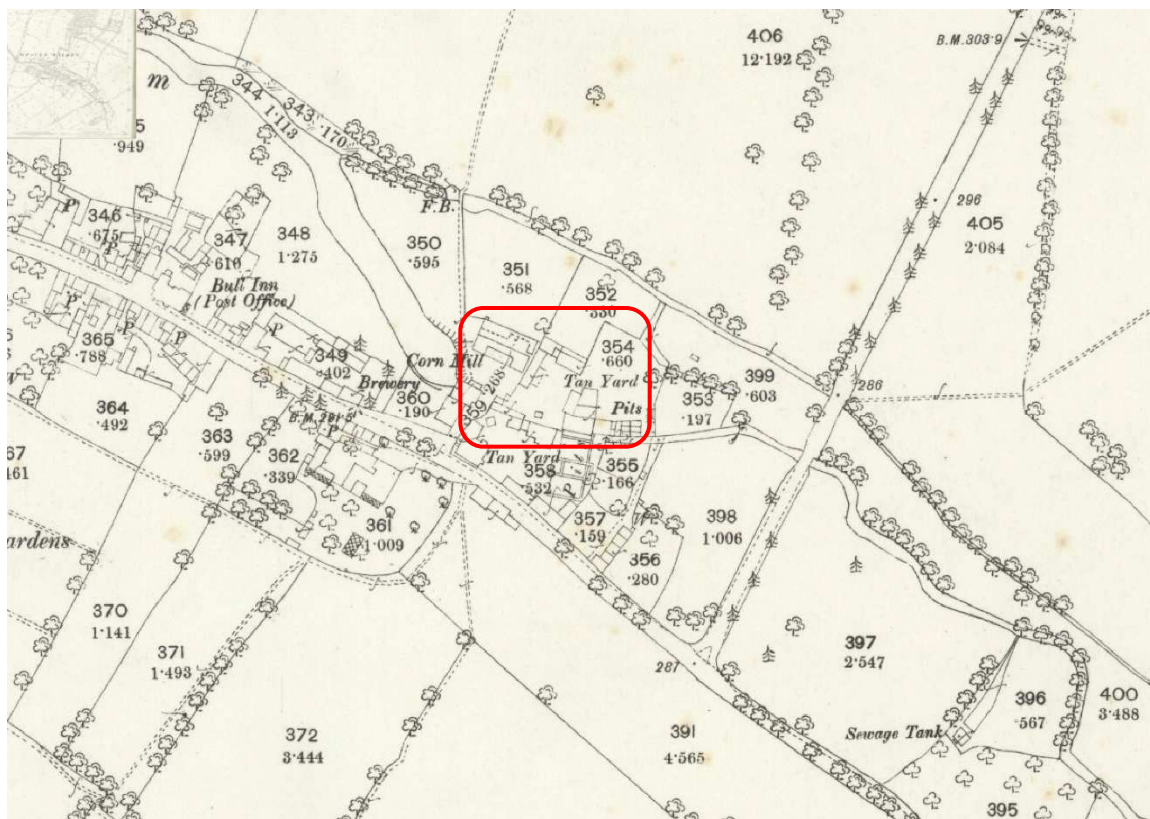


Fig 2. 1881 OS Map (Image Credit: National Library of Scotland) not to scale



Fig.3 1922 OS Map (Image Credit: National Library of Scotland) not to scale

By 1922 the map above indicates the tan yard no longer located on this site and the land to the east given over to an orchard. There does appear to be a building located within the courtyard of the mill barns which is in a similar location to where we are proposing the new dwelling within this application. The structure is set further into the courtyard than we have shown. Ideally, we would like to locate the new build further towards the south to retain the open courtyard composition which is currently held on site.

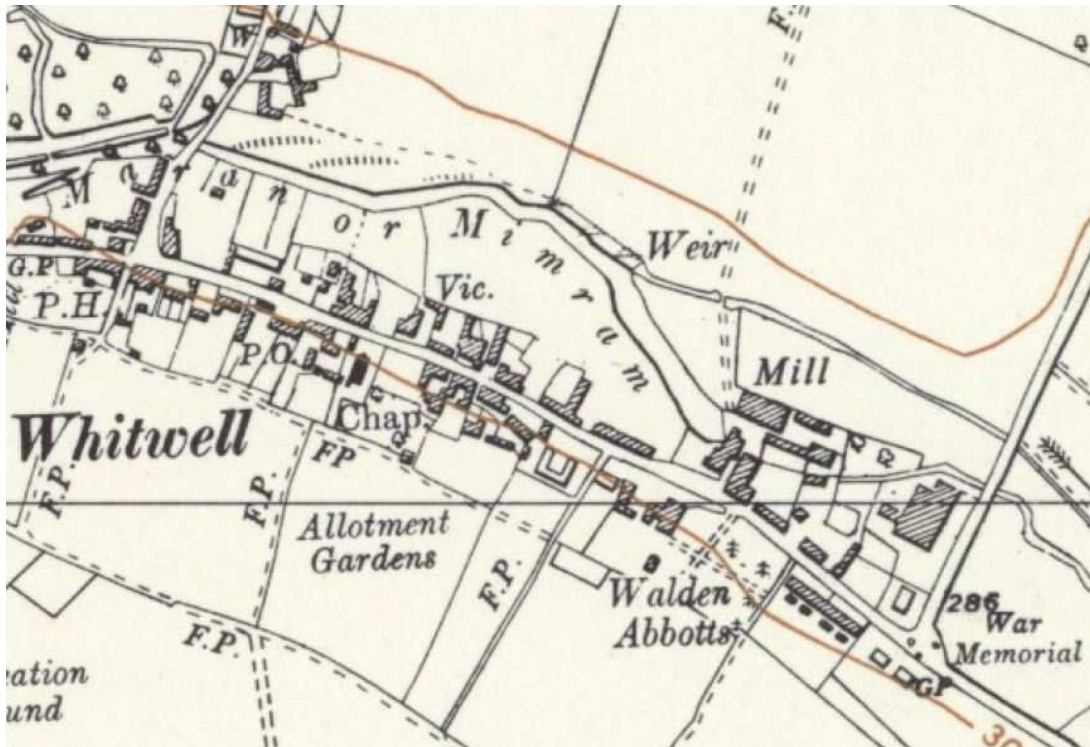


Fig.4 1960
OS Map
(Image
Credit:
National
Library of
Scotland)
not to scale

The 1960
map
remains

predominantly unchanged from the 1922 OS.

The area has been referred to in the North Herts District Council Conservation Area Character Statement regarding Whitwell. The site was noted as forming the historic industry hub of the village, containing a tannery, brewery and former water mill.

3.0 | PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORDS



Image of small approach road leading from main high street to the courtyard



Image of proposed site as seen from the northwest of the site



Image of eastern barn and the listed barn as seen from the north west of the proposed site across the courtyard



Image of listed barn as seen from the south



Image of No. 18 on the north side of the courtyard

4.0 | REVIEW OF ASSOCIATED ASSETS

National Heritage List for England (NHLE)

A review of the National Heritage List for England (NHLE) shows 4 entries within 100m of the application site. These are:

- Barn on roadside to the east of the Tun House (Grade II)- ref. 1103259
- The Tun House (Grade II)- ref. 1103258
- Number 18 (Mill House), Wall of mill dam extending to north and wheelpit and iron water wheel (Grade II)- ref. 1103260
- Grade II listed Barn in Former Mill Yard, believed to be late C16 or early C17. - ref: 1103261

HER (Historic Environment Record) for Hertfordshire & ST Albans

A review of the Historic Environment Record for Bedfordshire (HER) within 100m of the application site shows 2 results No.18 & No.16 as listed above.

It is considered that, The Tun Barns will not be affected due to the physical and visual separation, there will be no impact upon this identified heritage assets.

The Mill House and No.16 The Tun House do have a limited view of the site this however is over garages or a tall boundary wall. As the development has been kept to a modest scale the proposals are not considered as causing any significant effect on these.

Special care will be given to ensure that all construction traffic is mindful of the care that must be shown to the surround listed properties.

5.0 | IMPACT OF PROPOSED WORKS ON SITE SPECIFIC ASSETS

The proposed development will affect a Grade II listed building, this being a designated heritage asset as defined within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The significance of such heritage assets, and the impacts of the proposed development on those assets, is a material consideration in applications for planning and listed building consent and is covered by Section 16 of the NPPF.

The Listing is : Barn in former mill yard 50 metres to northeast of number 16 (Grade II)- ref. 1103261

The current application seeks permission for conversion of an existing barn and extension to form a new two-bed dwelling set directly opposite the Grade II listed barn.

The development as discussed in the design and access statement to in a modern barn style. Although we wish to create a barn building, we are not aiming to create an imitation of the existing barns but create a contemporary version in keeping with the materials and scale of the existing buildings surrounding the proposed site.

The development offers the opportunity to conserve the unlisted barn to the east, by giving it new life and in turn preserving it's structure.

There is a strong emphasis on retaining the open courtyard and the extension has been positioned further towards the orchard garden to enable this. Overall, the courtyard will feel reduced in size but the overall effect on the barn itself will be negligible.

As all construction traffic will be approaching from the south, so the Barn to the North will not be affected by this.