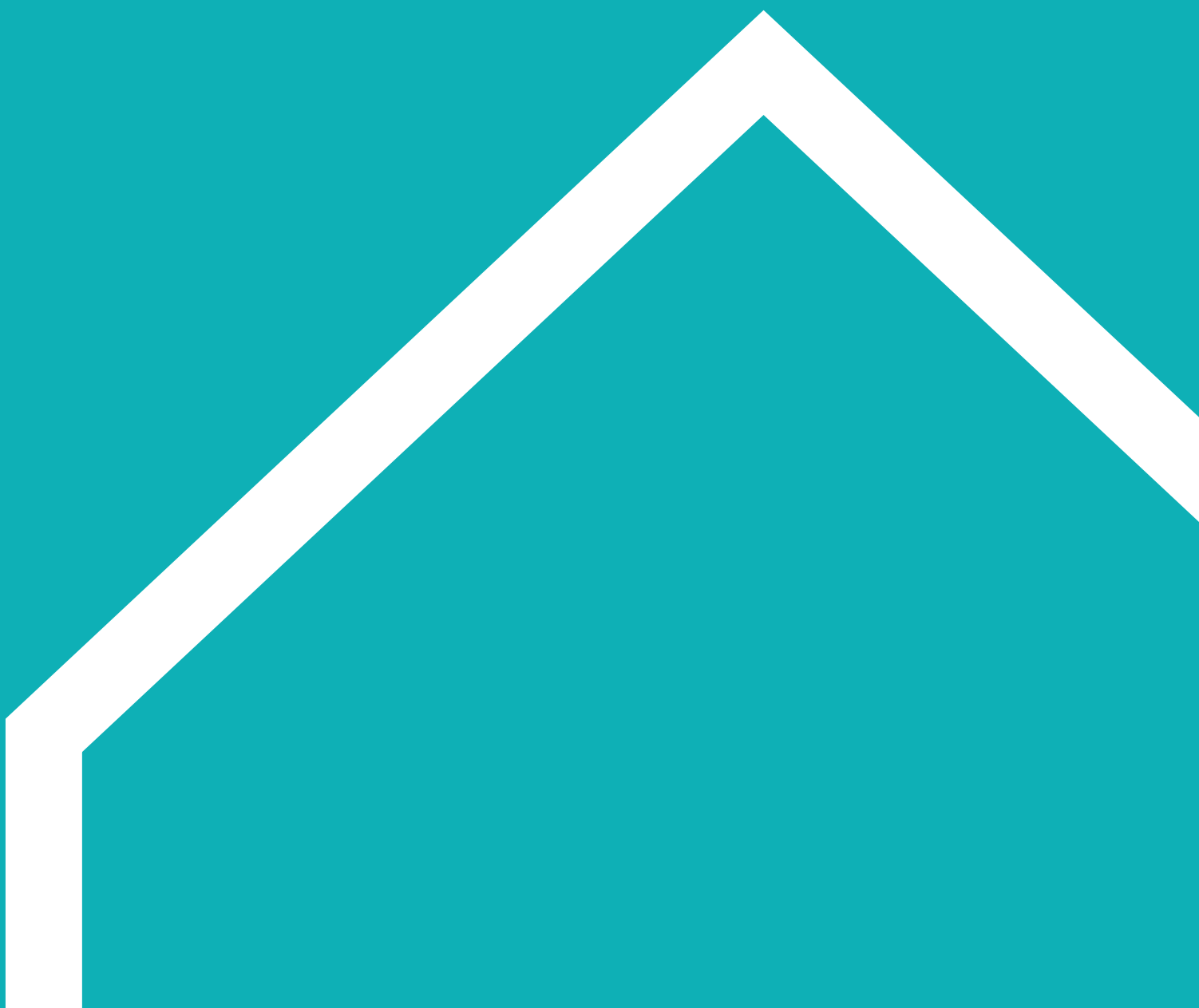
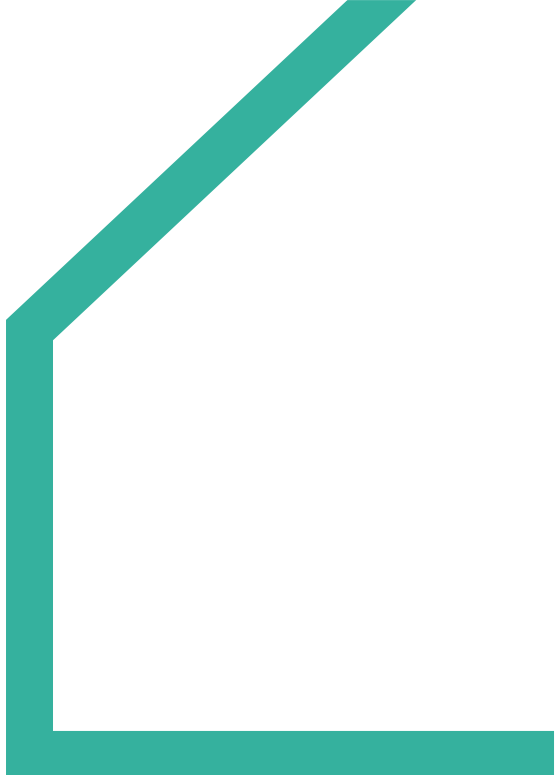


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Heritage Impact Assessment

Listed Building Consent for Internal
Alterations

26 Yew Lane, Coley Park, Reading, RG1 6DA

March 2023



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PROJECT

Retrospective Listed Building Consent for Internal Alterations

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report has been prepared to accompany an application for retrospective Listed Building Consent for internal alterations at the grade II listed 26 Yew Lane, Coley Park, Reading, RG1 6DA. These alterations consisted of works to change the location of the existing kitchen and creation of a separate smaller room and shower room in the kitchen location.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to understand, assess the significance and to analyse the impact of the proposed work including in order to comply with paragraph 194 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Historic England Advice Note 12.
- 1.3 This Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) should be read in conjunction with the other supporting planning documents and drawings prepared by Berrys and other consultants.
- 1.4 A previous application for Listed Building Consent was made to the Local Authority to replace the front and rear doors. This was approved in September 2020 (ref no. 200287).

2. Methodology

- 2.1 The methodology in this report will be based upon Historic England's Good Practice Advice in Planning 21 (GPA 2), Historic England's Advice Note 2 (HEAN 2), Historic England's Advice Note 10 (HEAN 10) and Historic England's Advice Note 12 (HEAN 12).
- 2.2 The report has primarily been produced through desktop research, using relevant secondary sources including:
- Historic Environment Records (HER)
 - Historic England National Heritage List England (NHLE)
 - UK Census Records (online resource)
 - National Library of Scotland (online resource)
 - Berkshire Record Office
- 2.3 A site visit was conducted on 21st March 2023 to assess the significance of the identified heritage asset and to take photos. Conditions were overcast with intermittent rain.
- 2.4 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, but a record of the discovery of historic features.

3. Identifying Heritage Assets

3.1 The NPPF 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. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).’

3.2 The application site (hereafter referred to as ‘the Site’) is the grade II listed 26 Yew Lane (Willow Tree Cottage), Coley Park, Reading, RG1 6DA.

3.3 Figure 1, Table 1 and 2 show the Site within its local context, with nearby heritage assets of interest labelled.

Table 1 - Listed Buildings

Name	Listing	Description
Building to south of Rose Cottage	II	Mid-C18 altered. 1½ storeys red brick with occasional blue bricks. Offset eaves courses. Half hipped old tile roof with louvred opening in north gable. Central door and 2 flanking later openings to west. Included for group value.
Rose Cottage	II	C18 altered. 1½ storeys red brick with blue header diapers in parts. Hipped slate roof. 1 bay to west, ½ dormer above, cross glazed sash windows. Later segmental headed door to left. Lean-to with further door to right. Interior altered.
Small Circular Dovecot at Coleypark Farm	II	C16 altered C17. Red brick and flint, rendered. Old tile roof and small lantern entrance. Door to west with lozenge datestone over "1593 TV" (Tanfield Vachel). Interior is lined with nests on curved chamfered planks separated by blocks of stone, one of which, being a patterned tile is said to come from Reading Abbey. The potence is retained.
Bailiff's Cottage	II	C18 altered. Links dovecote to coach house (qv). Red brick with some blue bricks. Rubbed brick flat arches.

		Tiled roof. 2 storeys. Irregular windows, glazing bar sashes with keystones. Band over ground floor of right hand bays continued from coach house. The cottage appears to have once been built of silver grey bricks with red brick dressings. Interior altered.
Coachhouse at Coley Park Farm	II	Probably C18 or early C19. Once silver grey bricks with red brick dressings. Stone keys, impost blocks and chamfered plinth returned at entrances. Stone moulded cope to parapet. Central break with 3 staggered segmental arches and ramped and shaped parapet. Lozenge clock in turret with weather arches (with wyvern). Flanking wings with doorways and rubbed brick band. 2 doors and 2 windows, with moulded cills to right hand wing. Slate roof.
Laundry Cottage and Stable at west end of barn at Coley Park Farm	II	Early C17. 2 storeys English bond brick with later windows, a 3 light casement on 1st floor and small way on ground floor. Door to left. Old tile roof continuous with stable.
East bridge over the Holy Brook at Coley Park Farm	II	East bridge over the Holy Brook at Coleypark Farm SU 77+ SW 17/600 II GV 2. Dated "CB 1765" on 2 central voussoir bricks. A single narrow and low segmental arch with flanking walls and parapet over. East parapet wall rebuilt.
West Bridge over the Holy Brook at Coley Park Farm	II	West bridge over the Holy Brook at Coleypark Farm SU 77 SW 17/601 II GV 2. Mid C19, Bath stone ashlar and brick; rendered. Segmental arch with parapet chanTered capping and cross gabled piers. Slightly curved approach wall to north-west and rounded break water. Brick to east with cement parapet.

Table 2 - Non-Designated Heritage Assets

Name	Description
Coley Park Farm, Reading, Berkshire	A range of farm buildings from 17th to 19th century date, originally associated with Coley Park mansion house; converted to housing late 1980s/early 1990s.
Saxon finds at Holy Brook - Coley Park Farm, Reading, Berkshire	Wooden fragments of a possible bowl, sherds of Saxon pottery and a worked birch stake were found in an excavated silt layer.
Reading Central Goods Line - Reading	Reading Central Goods Line now dismantled. The line to the Depot was known as the Coley Branch, the line and the depot opened in 1908. The Depot and branch line closed in 1983.
Mesolithic finds at Holybrook, Coley, Reading, Berkshire	Two Mesolithic blades and a blade like flake were found on a spoil heap of dredgings from the Holybrook.
Struck flint - The Old Lane, Coley, Reading, Berkshire	A prehistoric struck flint was recovered from the spoil during an archaeological evaluation at Bucknell House, The Old Lane, Coley.
Southcote Mill, Reading, Berkshire	A wheel driven mill. Southcote Mill is the site of only a small farm mill and wheel.

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:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021).
- National Planning Practice Guidance: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment (2019)
- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act (1990).
- Historic England - Conservation Principles: Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment (2008).
- Historic England - Good Practice Guide 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (2015).
- Historic England – Advice Note 2: Making Changes to Heritage Assets.
- Historic England – Advice Note 10: Listed Buildings and Curtilage

4.2 Section 16 of the NPPF contains policies for conserving and enhancing the historic environment. The Site is an identified designated heritage asset; therefore, paragraph 202 is most relevant to this development:

“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.”

4.3 The following policies from the Reading Borough Local Plan (November 2019) are also relevant:

- EN1: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment
- EN2: Areas of Archaeological Significance
- EN4: Locally Important Heritage Assets
- EN5: Protection of Significant Views with Heritage Interest
- EN6: New Development in a Historic Context

5. Historic Development & Appraisal

- 5.1 The Site is located within the Berkshire market town of Reading, roughly 1 mile southwest of the town centre and forms a part of the Coley Park Farm estate. The farm was once the location of ‘Coley House’, a grand manor house serving the Vachell family. It was built at some point between 1550-1560, with some outbuildings from this period still being retained, namely the round brick dovecote (1553), laundry, coach house and stables (1610) and barn (1619).
- 5.2 Reading itself dates from at least the Anglo-Saxon period, possibly even from the time of Roman occupation in Britain. In 870 an army of Danes invaded the Kingdom of Wessex and set up camp at Reading. The ensuing battle is described in the *“Anglo-Saxon Chronicle”*, with this account providing the earliest known written record of Reading.
- 5.3 The town became a place of pilgrimage, following the foundation of Reading abbey in 1121 by Henry I, who is buried within the Abbey grounds. This new influx of visitors allowed the town to prosper further and develop both economically and in population. This was largely interrupted in the 14th century by the arrival of the Black Death. Precise numbers of deaths are unknown, but the nearby town of Henley-on-Thames lost at least 60% of its population, which can give us some indication.
- 5.4 Reading continued to be the largest town in Berkshire and by 1611 had a population of over 5000. The principal trade in the town was cloth, which had made many of the resident’s wealthy. The town was at the centre of national events throughout the 17th century, being captured many times during the English Civil Wars and was the site of the only major engagement of the Glorious Revolution of 1688.
- 5.5 Like many other English cities, the 18th and 19th centuries saw the beginning of major industries based in Reading. Ironworks and brewing both became industries Reading was noted for. The town’s location was a major factor in its growth, being perfectly located on the major roads between London, Oxford and the West Country. This fortuitous location was further

cemented with the opening of the Kennet & Avon Canal in 1810, which made it possible to travel from Reading to the Bristol Channel.

- 5.6 The town saw little damage during the First and Second World War, when compared with other towns and cities, though one significant air raid did result in 41 deaths. The town continued to expand throughout the 20th century to accommodate the growing population. Reading is the largest settlement in the UK to be without city status and has been unsuccessful in bidding for city status three times. Today, Reading's role has become more centred on its proximity to London, with a large portion commuting to the capital. Data released in 2021 indicated that Reading was the town with the second largest proportion of residents commuting to London, in fact over 26% of Berkshire commutes to London for work.
- 5.10 Tithe records dating to 1838 (Figure 2) show the Site as being part of the "*Coley Farm Homestead Orchard Yards*". The landowner is "*John Bligh Monck*" whilst the occupier is listed as "*Daniel Wilshin Junior*".
- 5.11 Map regression (Figures 3-6) shows that the development which now surrounds much of the area now was developed later in the 20th/early 20th century. The historic layout of the farmstead courtyard is still legible and the open land to the south of the Site has been largely retained and preserved as Coley Water Meadows nature reserve.

6. Heritage Impact Assessment

6.1 The proposal seeks to secure retrospective listed building consent for internal alterations carried out by a previous owner. These alterations consisted of works to change the location the existing kitchen and creation of a separate smaller room and shower room in the kitchen location. These internal alterations were carried out by the previous owner, at some period between 1994 and 2004. It is believed that the works were done in response to damage done by a burst water pipe. As such, the previous kitchen was portioned to form the current shower room and study, with the more modern garage being converted into the current kitchen. In 2011 a Building Regularisation Certificate was sought which confirmed that the works were inspected, and no outstanding contraventions were noted (ref no. 11/07498/UAW).

6.2 The NPPF defines significance (when in relation to heritage) as follows:

“The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting. For World Heritage Sites, the cultural value described within each site’s Statement of Outstanding Universal Value forms part of its significance.”

6.3 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.

6.4 The Site is of some historic and architectural interest. The Site dates from the mid to late 18th century and is mostly constructed from red-brick with intermittent blue-brick occasionally used. This is likely due to repair work, with blue brick being considered stronger and impervious to weather conditions. Furthermore, the random, lack of pattern in their use indicates an ad-hoc approach of installation. However, there is one external display

of blue brick that shows design, on the Site's north elevation (Figure 13). The roof consists of plain tiles and is half-hipped. There is a later extension located on the southern elevation which does use these same materials and therefore allows for continuity of character. The Site is 1 ½ storeys in height and is of a smaller scale compared to its neighbouring buildings (Figure 15). The building features 7 wooden casement windows, with two further rooflights on the west and eastern sections of the roof. Whilst these windows are wooden in construction, it is noted that they are not original and were likely installed in the 1986 conversion. Internally there is further historic and architectural interest added through the retention of timber framing and a large open-hearth fireplace. The Site is therefore of some historic and architectural interest, though it should be noted that the official listing confirms that the Site is included on the list for group value with the rest of the Coley Park Farm estate. Whilst there have been a number of archaeological finds within the vicinity of the Site, it is considered that the nature of the works carried out would not have involved excavation and therefore would not have posed any risk to any unseen archaeological interest. It is considered that the majority of the Site's significance is derived from its historic relationship within the Coley Park Farm estate. The Site contributes to this historic form and layout of the farmstead, which remains legible despite considerable modern alteration and additions. Most of the architectural significance is derived from the survival of exposed timber framing and feature inglenook fireplace internally within the Site. Further to this, there is retention of historic brickwork on the external of the property, which does offer further architectural significance.

- 6.5 Coley Park Farm was converted in February 1986. Alongside the conversion of the existing farm buildings and cottages was the construction of 34 new dwellings (ref no. 85/TP/0820). Figure 16 shows an apartment block constructed during this period which is parallel to the Site. The design is divergent from the historic farmstead and is significantly greater in scale than the Site. Concerning the Site itself, an extension was added to the historic core to create space for a garage (Figure 14). This is dated later which is reflected in the visible change in brickwork and roof tiling. Further to this, the building has seen any historic windows replaced with modern

timber models. This work has caused harm to the historic and architectural significance of the Site. The loss of historic window material has harmed the architectural significance, whilst the garage extension has altered the historic form and created a visual divide between the original building and the later additions.

6.6 The application seeks for retrospective listed building consent for works carried out to change the location of the existing kitchen and creation of a separate smaller room and shower room in the kitchen location. Existing floor plans provided with this application show the area in question on the northern section of the ground floor, labelled as small bedroom/study and shower room. Internally this area does not provide a sizeable contribution to the historic or architectural interest of the Site. There is no legible survival of historic fabric within this area, besides the retention of an exposed timber beam which serves as the lintel for the door to the current 'shower room' (Figure 7). Timber framing for the property does not extend to within either room nor are there any historic or architectural features found within. This is likely to originate with the conversion of the Site and the original use of this area as a kitchen facility. Internally, the Site's significance is derived from the survival of historic timber framing, which is most evident within the main living space (Figure 11). Adding further significance is the open-hearth, inglenook fireplace which visually dominates the main living space (Figure 11). In this respect, the work carried out has not impacted on these areas and has therefore done no harm to the major significance of the Site.

6.7 Whilst these works have deviated from the historic layout, it is considered to be a minimal change and does not harm the Site's significance. The internal alterations made to accommodate these changes may have included the demolition of a wall, however, there is no further historic information to confirm this. Moreover, it is likely that this was a stud wall and was installed as part of the 1986 conversion, based on other existing internal walls within the building. Further to this, a stud wall was installed to extend the shower room and partition it from the small bedroom/study (Figure 10). This alteration is a change from the historic layout; however, it is not considered to constitute harm to the Site's significance, furthermore

the partition wall being stud, means it is a reversible alteration. As detailed in 6.4, the Site's significance is chiefly derived from its historical association with the wider Coley Park Farm Site. Architecturally, the Site's significance is derived from the retention of historic material, most notably historic timbers and the inglenook fireplace within the main living space and retained brick on the external of the Site. In this respect, the works have had no direct impact on these elements of significance and as such are considered to have resulted in no harm.

- 6.8 Design guidance on the two later spaces has been defined chiefly by ensuring continuity of character with the building and by the utilitarian needs of the space. The area now labelled as 'study' has had its walls painted a cream/off-white with doors frames and skirting boards left as exposed wood. This is the same general design found throughout the first floor of the building. The continuity of this design has therefore mitigated the changes the works have made to the historic layout. The current shower room is, by necessity, more utilitarian in design. Use as a bathroom will mean this room will experience higher levels of moisture/damp and material changes were required to accommodate this. The shower room is tiled on two walls with laminated panelling covering the remaining two, as well as the ceiling, with the floor composed of mosaic tiles. Further to this, there is a portion of timber boxing protruding slightly from the northern wall which disguises the unsightly inner workings/pipes which serve the shower. Whilst these elements are divergent from the existing design throughout the Site, it is argued that the utilitarian needs of accommodating the shower space outweigh the desire to create continuity of design throughout the entire house. Bathrooms/shower spaces are areas of a building which will experience higher levels of moisture and therefore are at greater risk of suffering from damp and mould. A further change required to facilitate use as a bathroom is the creation of an extractor/filter system. This has been installed in the Site's northern elevation with two extracting units visible on the external of the building (Figure 13). This system is required to further facilitate the level of moisture that the room will experience. There is also a pre-existing window to further serve as ventilation for the room. Whilst this is a modern installation it is considered that the benefits of protecting the building from damp/mould outweighs

any harm caused. It would be considered imprudent to expose any historic material to these levels of moisture, or to design the shower room in a way which is unsuitable and unsustainable for its use. A further note to make is that the space restrictions on the first floor created by the half hip roof prevent the creation of a shower facility within the provided upstairs bathroom.

6.9 The building is of a smaller scale but still forms an integral part of the historic Coley Park Farm estate. The main consideration for the owner, therefore, is to avoid extending the Site which could result in harm to the setting of the Site and nearby listed buildings, by altering the legibility of the historic formal design. An extension would diverge from this and therefore cause indirect harm to the neighbouring listed buildings. A further alternative proposal would be utilising a portion of the large space currently in use as the main living room. However, much of the Site's significance is located within this area, derived from architectural interest (5.12) and any works within this area would inevitably cause harm as it would likely require the removal of historic fabric. The owners have sought not to cause harm to the Site; hence this location has not been used. It is therefore concluded that the works carried out represent the only reasonable way of creating a further shower/study space.

6.10 The works have allowed the Site to better function as a private living space. The Site is of a reduced scale compared to most modern dwellings, with the available space compressed by the extent of the main living room, which contains within it the majority of historic and architectural significance for the Site. In this respect it is argued that the proposal provides a public benefit. Para 8 of the NPPF states that a public benefit refers to anything which aids the delivery of the economic, social or environmental objectives of sustainable development. Within the social objective of this development, it is stated:

"a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations"

The proposal meets this objective by securing the Site as a sustainable private dwelling, which is considered the optimum viable use for the Site. The securing of a long-term use of a heritage asset is considered the best way of ensuring its long-term conservation.

7. Conclusion

- 7.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), 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.”

- 7.2 The Site is a grade II listed building and therefore is of higher status and consideration than non-designated heritage assets, but lower than grade I and II* listed buildings. However, it should be noted that the Site is listed for ‘group value’ with the surrounding buildings within the Coley Park Farm estate. The NPPF determines that proposal which will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage assets should be weighed against the public benefit of the proposal, including the securing of optimum viable use.
- 7.3 It is considered that the works **do not give rise to harm** to the historic or architectural significance of the Site. The works have been limited to the pre-existing C20 kitchen, which do not contain within it any outstanding elements of historic or architectural significance. It has been demonstrated that the Site’s significance is derived from the historic and architectural features retained within the existing living room. This includes a large quantity of exposed timber framing and the inglenook fireplace. Moreover, the Site has historic significance from its relationship to the wider Coley Park Farm estate. This relationship has not been harmed by the works.
- 7.4 There is a minor change in form from the partitioning of the original kitchen, however, it is argued that this is outweighed and mitigated by the benefit of securing sustainable housing and by safeguarding the optimum viable use of the Site as a private dwelling, which has been brought about by the internal changes. Moreover, this form was altered in the 1986 redevelopment and does not reflect the original 18th century building layout.

8. Appendix 1 - Maps/Plans



Figure 1 - The Site is labelled along with nearby heritage assets.

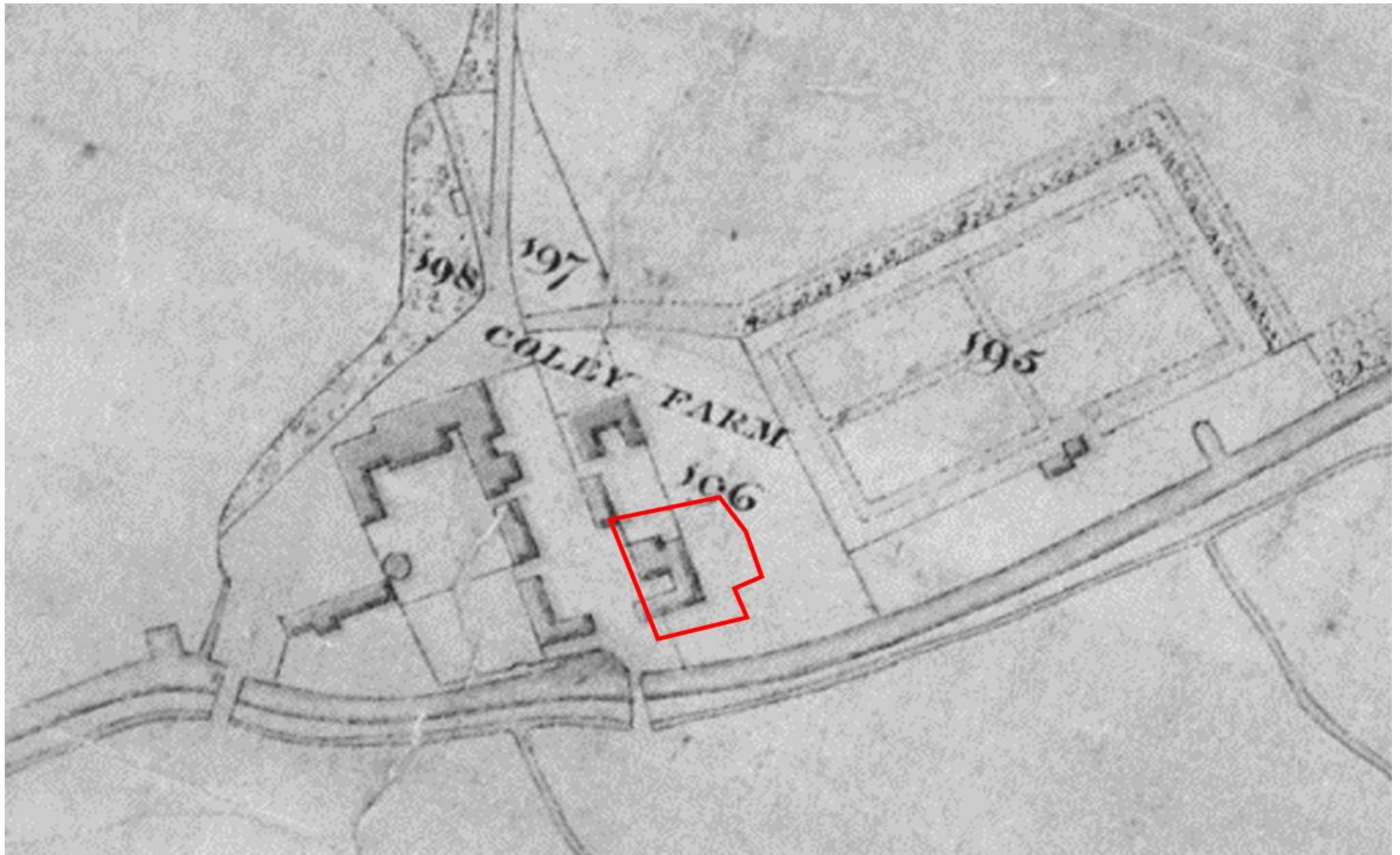


Figure 2 - Tithe Map, 1838

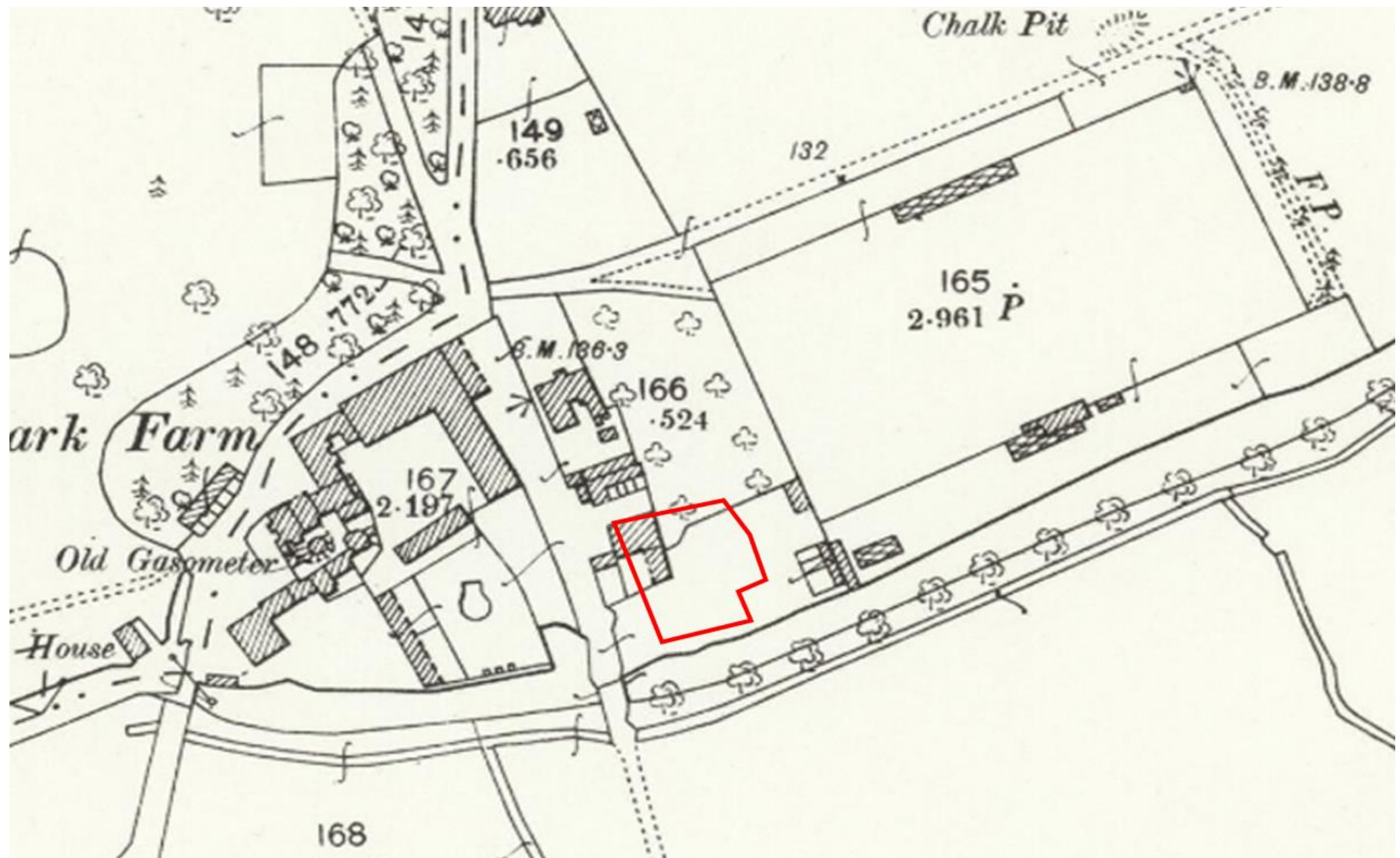


Figure 3 - OS Map, 1899

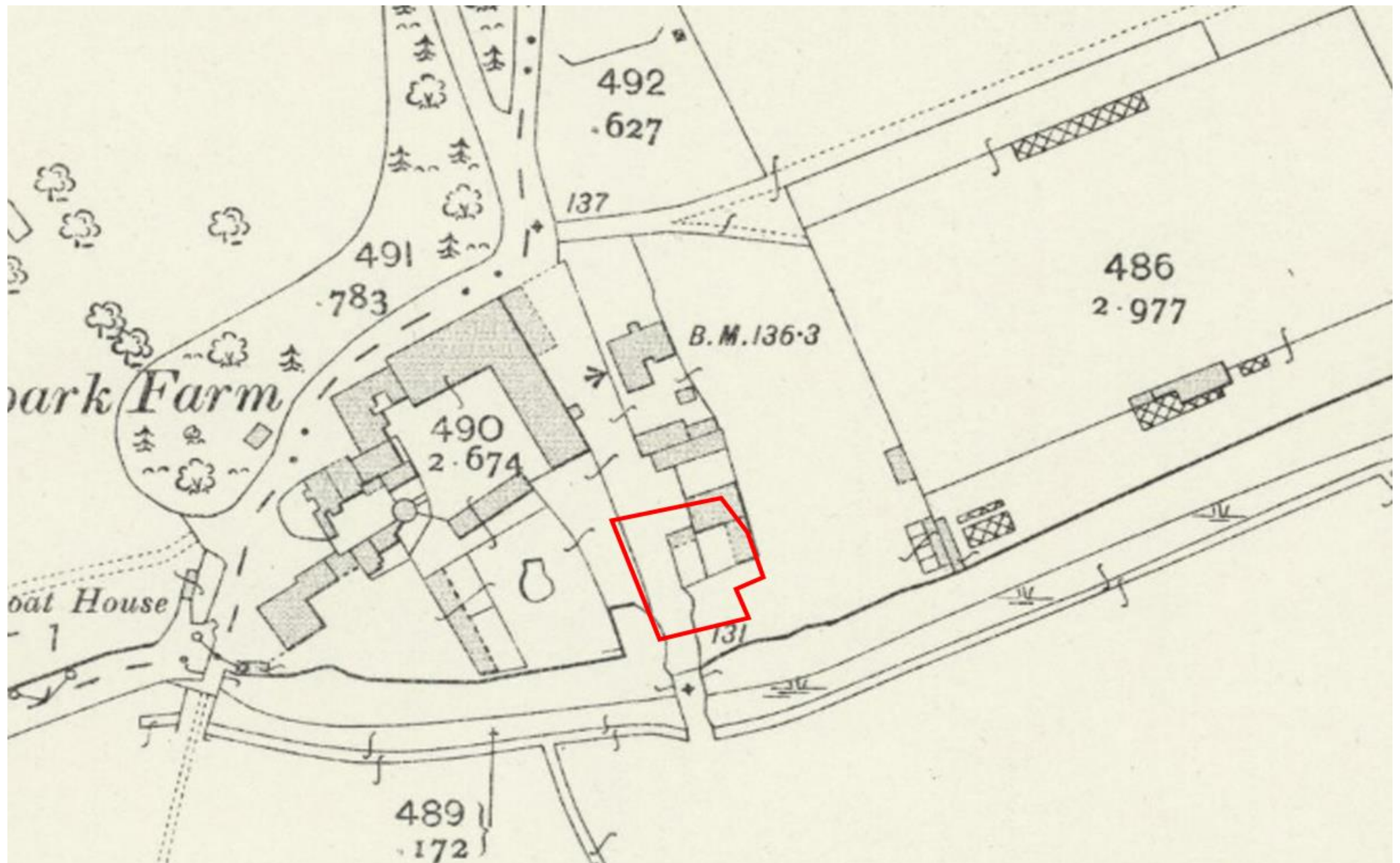


Figure 4 – OS Map, 1911

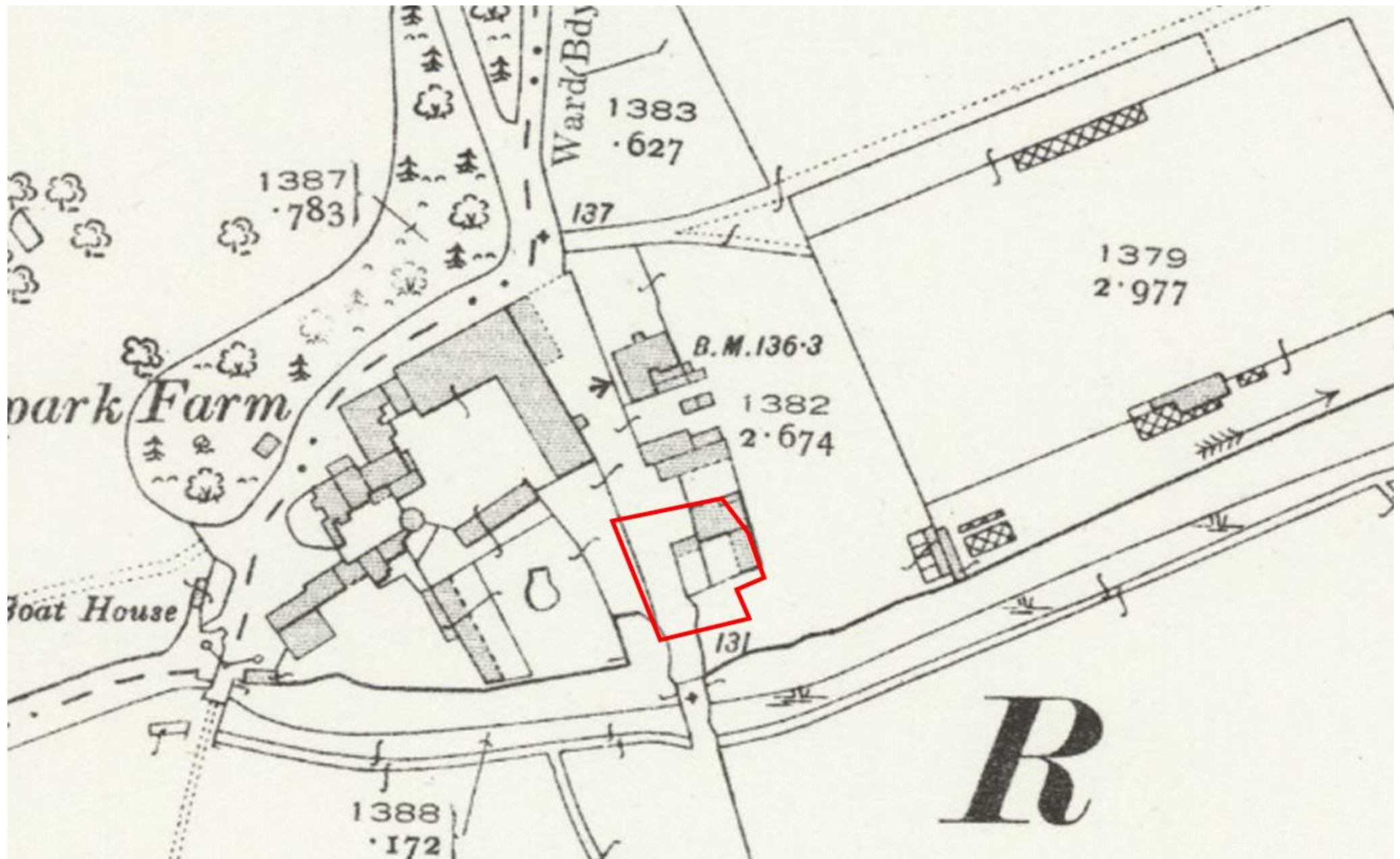


Figure 5 – OS Map, 1934

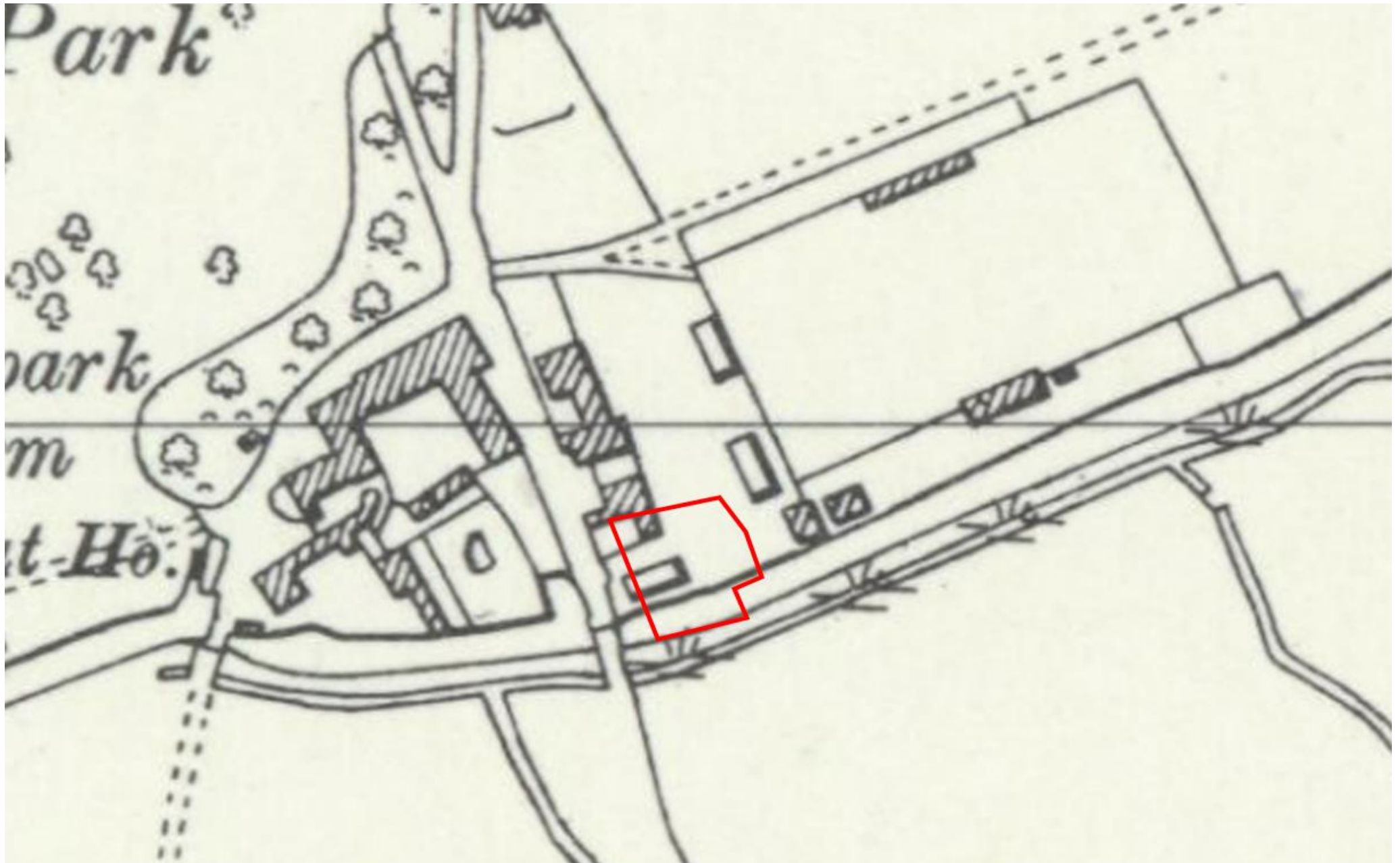


Figure 6 - OS Map, 1962

9. Appendix 2 – Photos



Figure 7 - Main entrance to the relevant area of the Site. Note the timber beam framing extending to the area and use as door lintel.



Figure 8 – Internal view of the shower room



Figure 9 – Alternative view to shower room. Pre-existing window visible.

Client: Jenny Dean
Berrys Reference: SA47331



Figure 10 – Study/small bedroom. Far wall is stud wall dividing from shower room.



Figure 11 – Main living room. The architectural and historic features found within this room contribute to the Site's significance.



Figure 12 – Western elevation of the Site. The later garage (now in use as kitchen) is viewable on the right.



Figure 13 – The Site's north elevation. The proposal location is on this elevation, the pre-existing window and external filters are viewable.



Figure 14 – The Site's east elevation. The later garage extension (which is now in use as the kitchen) is clearly visible.



Figure 15 – The Site is in limited scale when compared to neighbouring buildings.



Figure 16 – Later development directly opposite to the Site. This is of a significantly larger scale than neighbouring buildings and is divergent in character from the historic Coley Park Farm estate.



Figure 17 – Coley Park Farm estate. The historic layout of the farmstead is still legible, with surviving buildings such as the dovecote (left) adding historic significance to the area.



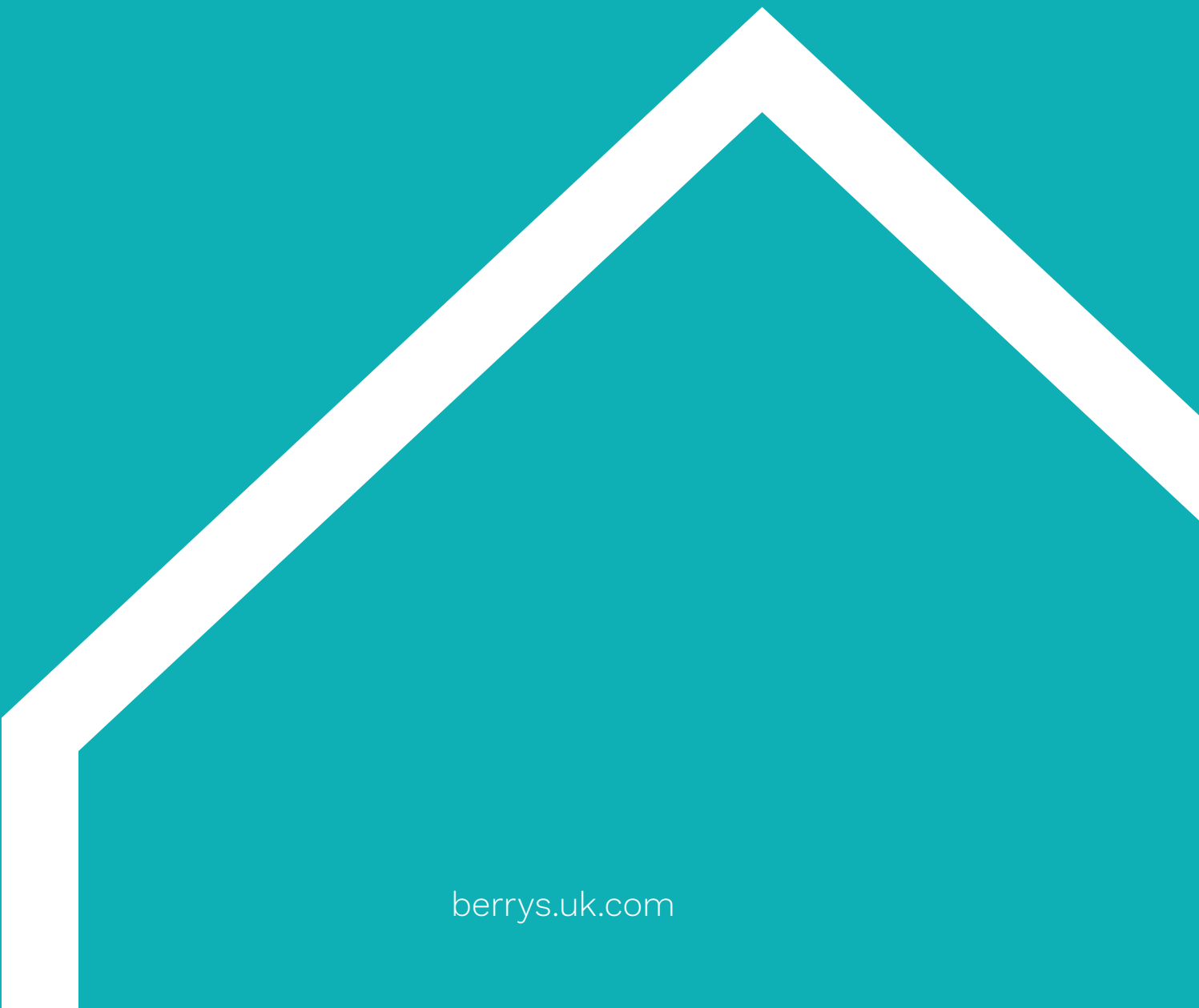
Figure 18 – Closer view of the historic farmstead. The main farm dwellings and barns have been converted into residential. This was carried out in 1986 and involved the conversion of the Site.



Figure 19 – Holy Brook borders the southern edge of the estate, separating the estate from the Coley Water Meadow nature reserve.



Figure 20 – View out from the estate towards Coley Water Meadow, with Holy Brook in the intervening view.



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