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Orion Reference: PN4161

## **Land at Lunce's Hill, Haywards Heath Built Heritage Technical Note**



### **1.0 Introduction**

#### **Aims and Scope**

- 1.1** This built heritage technical note considers the opportunities and constraints in relation to the proposed retention and conversion of the curtilage-listed barn located within the western extent of Land at Lunce's Hill, Haywards Heath (hereafter referred to as 'the site').
- 1.2** This technical note supports the findings of the structural survey report prepared by Dixon Hurst Consulting Civil and Structural Engineers in June 2025, which concluded that the timber-framed barn is suitable for conversion for domestic or commercial usage.
- 1.3** A site visit was carried out by Orion Heritage on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2024 to support the production of a Heritage Statement, which identified that the retention and conversion of the barn will reverse the harmful impacts of its poor maintenance to date, secure its long-term future as part of the curtilage of the Grade II listed Cleavewater, and preserve elements of its historic fabric that generate historic value.

#### **Location and Description**

- 1.4** The barn lies c. 20m to the south of the Grade II listed Cleavewater, within its historic plot. The footprint of the barn appears on the 1838 tithe map of Wivelsfield, then appears consistently on historic maps thereafter, indicating the retention of its historic fabric and layout. It is shown within the same plot of land (513) as Cleavewater by the 1838 tithe survey, demonstrating its historic ties to the listed house. Both the age of the barn and its proximity to the listed house mean it is considered to fall within its curtilage.
- 1.5** While the age and historic value of the barn is evident within the abovementioned records, this historic value is not necessarily readily legible from within the historic plot of the barn and listed house, or from within their surroundings, including within the study site. The current condition of the barn, which has been poorly maintained, has reduced the legibility of this historic value. Following observations of the barn during the site visit, it is considered to be likely that the barn has lost some historic fabric over time,



which will have eroded the element of its significance derived from its historic value, both in its own right and also as part of the curtilage of the Grade II listed Cleavewater. The original assessment within the Heritage Statement considered the barn to be of little architectural value, based on observations of the barn's exterior during the site visit, and subject to a subsequent inspection of the barn's interior.



Plate 1 The western elevation of the barn



Plate 2 View of the barn along Lunce's Hill, adjacent to the Grade II listed Cleavewater



Plate 3 View of the barn within the study site, adjacent to the Grade II listed Cleavewater



Plate 4 View of the eastern elevation of the barn



Plate 5 View of the barn from the Grade II listed Cleavewater

## 2.0 Structural Survey and the Principle of Conversion

### Summary of Structural Survey

- 2.1 The structural survey of the barn found that the internal timber framing was in a 'reasonable condition' and was 'suitably sized' to support the structure of the barn. This timber framing brings a level of architectural value to the barn which had not previously been observed during the site visit. It is thought that there has been some loss of timber frames to increase the usable floor space within the barn, which supports the consideration within the Heritage Statement that some loss of historic fabric is likely to have occurred.
- 2.2 The structural survey identified elements of the timber framing which have both undergone repairs and require further repair. The extent to which there has been movement within the lean-to walls of the building was not clear owing to the poor maintenance of the building to date. Overall, the structural survey determined that the timber framing of the barn is suitable for retention, and the barn itself is suitable for conversion for domestic or commercial usage. In any case, repairs to the structure of the barn and its timber framing will be required, as well as further investigation of the foundations.
- 2.3 The following list of works, though not exhaustive, will likely be required to secure the retention of the barn:
- Repair and/or replacement of timber framing
  - Local mass concrete underpinning

- Clearance of unused timber and debris
- Resurfacing of flooring
- Installation of windows and doors
- Installation of drainage and other works to ensure a watertight structure
- Decoration and furnishing

### **Proposed Conversion in Principle**

- 2.4** Based on the above findings and the assessments within the Heritage Statement, the conversion of the barn is considered to be the most viable option to secure its long-term future. In principle, the conversion of the barn in any capacity will involve the repair and/or replacement of elements of its timber framing, potential works to the foundations of its walls, and other such alterations. It is true that these works will inevitably result in alterations to, or loss of, some elements of the barn's historic fabric which generate its relative historic and architectural value, which in principle will be erosive of its significance as a curtilage-listed building, bringing a level of less than substantial harm.
- 2.5** That said, much of the historic and architectural value of the barn has already been eroded through its poor maintenance and elements of its historic fabric which have already been lost. In principle, the conversion of the barn presents the opportunity to reinstate the full structural integrity of the barn, and secure the long-term future of its extant historic fabric. The barn's conversion will also improve the legibility of its historic and architectural value, both within its interior, and from within its surroundings in relation to the Grade II listed Cleavewater.
- 2.6** While the conversion of the barn would, in principle, bring a level of less than substantial harm to the significance of the barn and the Grade II listed Cleavewater, this would be in the lowest ranges of less than substantial harm.

### **3.0 Proposed Conversion for Use Class E**

- 3.1** In light of the above assessment, it is proposed that the barn be converted for Use Class E. This is owing to the limited space within the barn and its unique structure and timber framing, which will be retained as extensively as possible to reduce levels of less than substantial harm. The retention and repair of the timber framing, and any other remedial works, will take precedence over the design and layout of the barn's future usage. In light of this, it is proposed to retain the barn's relatively open internal structural layout, which Use Class E would be most optimal for.
- 3.2** Conversion of the barn for Use Class E would also ensure the least invasive works required to secure said conversion, with limited need for installation of utilities and permanent fittings and fixtures, allowing for a dynamic use of the space which predominantly focuses on the preservation and appreciation of the barn's original structure and features.

- 3.3** While the conversion of the barn would, in principle, bring a level of less than substantial harm to the significance of the barn and the Grade II listed Cleavewater, this would be in the lowest ranges of less than substantial harm. Conversion of the barn for Use Class E would ensure that levels of less than substantial harm are in the lowest ranges possible, providing scope for the retention of the majority of the barn's historic fabric, and the more limited conversion works required to secure the barn's long-term future.
- 3.4** The proposed conversion of the barn for Use Class E will allow for the appreciation of the barn's structural integrity and historic fabric which generates its historic and architectural value. This value will be preserved and/or restored by the remedial works identified and, while the conversion will inevitably bring a low level of less than substantial harm upon this value, this will need to be weighed against the benefits of the proposed conversion in line with paragraph 216 of the National Planning Policy Framework.