

Stone Hall, Haywards Heath Road, Balcombe
Statement of Significance
April 2024

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Report

Statement of Significance

Site

Stone Hall, Haywards Heath Road, Balcombe

Client

Penelope Greenwood

Planning Authority

Mid Sussex District Council

Grid Reference

TQ 32214 28829

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This Statement of Significance considers the Grade I listed Stone Hall (NHLE 1286412), Haywards Heath Road, Balcombe (hereinafter referred to as the “subject building”). In accordance with government policy (*National Planning Policy Framework* December 2023) and guidance (Historic England’s *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance* 2008), this assessment outlines the historical development of the subject building, analyses their physical attributes and assesses the heritage significance of them in accordance with the listing criteria set out in *Principles of Selection for Listed Buildings* (DCMS, 2018). The latter document sets out the general principles that the Secretary of State applies when deciding whether a building is of special architectural or historic interest and should be added to the list of buildings compiled under the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act* 1990. Reference has also been made to the guidance contained in Historic England’s publication *Listing Selection Guide Domestic 3: Suburban and Country Houses Listing Selection Guide* (updated 2017).

The Grade I listed Stone Hall (NHLE 1286412) has been described and analysed against the listing criteria for its typology as outlined by Historic England’s guidance. It is considered that Stone Hall retains a high level of historic, illustrative, associative, and architectural value, which principally relates to the historic core of the building. Any proposed works within the historic core of the building should be carefully considered, so as not to disturb any extant historic building fabric. This may take the form of utilising existing ducts, cable routes and voids within the building. Similarly, any external works to the building should take into account potential impacts that they may have on the architectural and aesthetic value of the building and its setting.

The mid-1960’s extension to the building is considered to have very limited to no value in heritage terms. Future internal alteration, or reconfiguration within this section of the building is unlikely to have a negative impact on the high level of significance of the historic core of the building. It should be noted that works that are proposed at the point where this extension interfaces with the historic core should be carefully considered so as not to disturb any historic building fabric. Any external works will need to be carefully considered in terms of the visual impact that they may have on the architectural and aesthetic value of the historic core of the building or its setting.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1** This Statement of Significance considers the Grade I listed Stone Hall, Haywards Heath Road, Balcombe (hereinafter referred to as the “subject building” which is located at grid reference TQ 32214 28829.
- 1.2** In accordance with relevant Historic England guidance and advice notes, including *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment* document (2008) and *Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets* (Advice Note 12, 2019), this assessment:
- outlines the historic development of the subject building and provides an assessment of the heritage values that contribute to its significance;
 - includes the results of a site survey, which included an internal and external inspection carried out on 11th January 2024 when weather conditions were sunny, and visibility was good.
 - includes an examination of published and unpublished records, charts historic land-use through a map regression exercise and identifies key changes, including additions to the subject building, that have occurred over time. As part of the latter, historic planning records have been reviewed to determine more recent changes in particular.
- 1.3** The key objectives of this analysis are to:
- identify heritage values associated with the subject building and/or parts of it; and
 - assess significance to establish the level of significance associated with the subject building.
- 1.4** The assessment enables relevant parties to assess the level of significance of the subject building. This will aid in determining where intervention could occur to the more historic elements of the building and those areas which may have limited or no value in heritage terms.

Location and description

- 1.5** Stone Hall (NHLE 1286412) is Grade I listed and is the principal building within the historic farm complex of Stone Hall Farm. The grouping of buildings that form this complex are located at the end of lane which runs in a north-easterly direction from Stonehall Lane in the west (Figure 1). Though Stone Hall is the only designated building within the plot, several of the other more historic ancillary building located in the immediate vicinity would likely be considered curtilage listed and/or non-designated built heritage assets. These other buildings consist of a mixture of barns, kennels, smaller outbuildings and dwelling houses. All of these significantly contribute to the immediate setting

of the subject building by providing an historic ancillary and functional context. The wider environs of the subject building largely consist of open agricultural land to the west interspersed with blocks of mature woodland and hedge lined fields and lanes. Located c. 235m to the north-east is the Grade II* listed Balcombe Place (NHLE 1025775) which has historic and current connections to the subject building. The fields, gardens and parkland associated with Balcombe Place form the rural context of Stone Hall to the north and east. A summary of the key elements of the subject building is provided below with a more detailed physical description and fabric analysis in section 4.

- 1.6** Based on background research and a review of the historic mapping, the more historic sections of Stone Hall were constructed sometime during the second half of the 17th century, before being significantly extended during the mid-1960's (Figure 14). The 1839 Balcombe Parish Tithe map (Figure 4) shows the subject building as having a sub-rectangular planform with a projecting wing on its south-west corner. Its principal (east elevation) is formed by two further projecting bays on the north-east and south-east corners of the façade. To the west of the building, several barn structures are shown which address a central courtyard/farmyard and correspond to footprints of extant buildings on the site. To the east of Stone Hall, a rectangular garden plot is depicted which is enclosed by a paled fence line. Interestingly, the principal routeway towards Stone Hall is shown as running in a north-east direction to the east of the building. This routeway would later become the southern driveway to Balcombe Place.
- 1.7** As noted, the original planform of the building has undergone a level of change over the succeeding years, most notably with the construction of an H-shaped range connecting to the north-west corner of the building during the mid-1960's which related to the provision of a staff flat, guest rooms, drawing room and playroom. These later alterations to the historic core of the building are characterised by a coursed sandstone base with timber weatherboarding on all elevations up to eaves level. The eaves have exposed rafter ends which support a Horsham stone tile roof. Fenestration is symmetrically set out at ground and first floor levels and consists of double-glazed timber framed casements. There are two prominent chimney stacks constructed in a red brick laid in a stretcher bond which service the kitchen and drawing room.
- 1.8** The historic core of Stone Hall is raised in an orange brick with blue vitrified headers and laid in a Flemish bond. Similar to the later additions, this brickwork is formed on a coursed sandstone base. The local sandstone is utilised further in the form of a broad string course at first floor level and in the formation of prominent V-jointed quoins on the corners of the building which are particularly prominent on the principal (east) elevation. In contrast, the north and west elevations are finished with a clay tile hanging which reaches from ground to eaves level.

- 1.9** The eaves are relatively decorative and consist of a timber moulding beneath a boxed fascia and soffit with timber modillions forming a corbel table. The roof is covered with Horsham stone tiles and punctuated by three pitched dormers on the principal (east) elevation. Rising above these and set centrally within the building are two fluted brick chimney stacks with corbelled tops.
- 1.10** The fenestration of this section of the building is symmetrically laid out at ground and first floor level and consists of timber framed casement windows with segmented glass panes. The principal (east) elevation has a timber entrance door centrally set between the two protruding bays on the north-east and south-east corners of the building and is topped by an over-light and recessed curved pediment.

2.0 Planning background including policy and guidance

Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

2.1 The *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990* sets out broad policies and obligations relevant to the listing of special buildings.

2.2 Section 1(1) of the Act states:

For the purposes of this Act and with a view to the guidance of local planning authorities in the performance of their functions under this Act and the principal Act in relation to buildings of special architectural or historic interest, the Secretary of State shall compile lists of such buildings, or approve, with or without modifications, such lists compiled by the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England (in this Act referred to as 'the Commission') or by other persons or bodies of persons, and may amend any list so compiled or approved.

2.3 Section 1(3) of the Act states:

In considering whether to include a building in a list compiled or approved under this section, the Secretary of State may take into account not only the building itself but also

- a) any respect in which its exterior contributes to the architectural or historic interest of any group of buildings of which it forms part; and*
- b) the desirability of preserving, on the ground of its architectural or historic interest, any feature of the building consisting of a man-made object or structure fixed to the building or forming part of the land and comprised within the curtilage of the building*

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

2.4 Government policy in relation to the historic environment is outlined in Section 16 of the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF), entitled *Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment*. This provides guidance for planning authorities, property owners, developers and others on the conservation and investigation of heritage assets. Overall, the objectives of Section 16 of the NPPF can be summarised as seeking the:

- Delivery of sustainable development;
- understanding the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits brought by the conservation of the historic environment;
- conservation of England's heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance; and

- recognition of the contribution that heritage assets make to our knowledge and understanding of the past.

- 2.5** Section 16 of the NPPF recognises that intelligently managed change may sometimes be necessary if heritage assets are to be maintained for the long term.
- 2.6** Paragraph 198 requires local planning authorities to maintain or have access to a historic environment record, which can be used to assess significance of heritage assets and the contribution they make to their environment. Paragraph 193 also requires that authorities make information about the historic environment gathered as part of plan-making or development management publicly accessible.
- 2.7** *Heritage Assets* are defined in Annex 2 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 assets include designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).
- 2.8** *Designated Heritage Assets* comprise: World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, Protected Wreck Sites, Registered Parks and Gardens, Registered Battlefields and Conservation Areas.
- 2.9** *Significance* is defined as: the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. This interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.
- 2.10** *Setting* is defined 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.

Guidance: Assessing Significance

Principles of Selection for Listed Buildings (DCMS 2018)

- 2.11** The *Principles of Selection for Listed Buildings* (DCMS, 2018) sets out the general principles that the Secretary of State applies when deciding whether a building is of special architectural or historic interest and should be added to the list of buildings compiled under the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990*.

- 2.12** The statutory criteria for listing are the special architectural or historic interest of a building. Many buildings are interesting architecturally or historically but, in order to be listed, a building must have 'special' interest.
- 2.13** Buildings on the list are graded to reflect their relative architectural and historic interest. Buildings of historic interest may justify a higher grading than would otherwise be appropriate.
- Grade I buildings are of exceptional interest;
 - Grade II* buildings are particularly important buildings of more than special interest;
 - Grade II buildings are of special interest, warranting every effort to preserve them.
- 2.14** In addition to the statutory criteria and the general principles contained in this guidance, Selection Guides for different building types have been published by Historic England. The Selection Guides provide detailed technical information about each building type and are linked to the general principles contained in this guidance. They demonstrate what features are considered significant and likely to make a building of special architectural or historic interest when assessing buildings of a type from different periods, regions, or styles. It is recognised that some buildings are unique or will fall into more than one building type. Where a building is a composite of different types, then any relevant criteria from the Selection Guides applies. The general principles outlined below take precedence over the Selection Guides, which are published as supplementary information. The most relevant guide in this instance is the *Domestic 3: Suburban and Country Houses Listing Selection Guide* (updated 2017)].
- 2.15** The Secretary of State uses the following selection criteria when assessing whether a building is of special interest and therefore should be added to the statutory list:
- *Architectural Interest:* To be of special architectural interest a building must be of importance in its design, decoration or craftsmanship. Special interest may also apply to particularly significant examples of building types or techniques (e.g. buildings displaying technological innovation or virtuosity) and significant plan forms. Engineering and technological interest can be an important consideration for some buildings. For more recent buildings in particular, the functioning of the building (to the extent that this reflects on its original design and planned use, where known) will also be a consideration. Artistic distinction can also be a factor relevant to the architectural interest of buildings and objects and structures fixed to them.
 - *Historic Interest:* To be able to justify special historic interest a building must illustrate important aspects of the nation's history and/or have closely substantiated historical associations with nationally important individuals,

groups or events; and the building itself in its current form will afford a strong connection with the valued aspect of history.

General Principles

2.16 The following principles are used to determine if a building merits statutory listing.

2.17 *Age and rarity:* The older a building is, and the fewer the surviving examples of its kind, the more likely it is to have special interest. The following chronology is meant as a guide to assessment; the dates are indications of likely periods of interest and are not absolute. The relevance of age and rarity will vary according to the particular type of building because for some types, dates other than those outlined below are of significance. However, the general principles used are that:

- before 1700, all buildings that retain a significant proportion of their original fabric are likely to be regarded of special interest;
- from 1700 to 1850, most buildings that retain a significant proportion of their original fabric are likely to be regarded of special interest, though some selection is necessary;
- from 1850 to 1945, because of the greatly increased number of buildings erected and the much larger numbers that have survived, progressively greater selection is necessary;
- careful selection is required for buildings from the period after 1945, another watershed for architecture.

2.18 The following relevant principles are used to determine if a building merits statutory listing.

2.19 *Aesthetic merits:* The appearance of a building (both its intrinsic architectural merit or any group value) is often a key consideration in listing, but the special interest will not always be reflected in obvious external visual quality. Buildings that are important for reasons of technological or material innovation, engineering or as illustrating particular aspects of social or economic history, may have little external visual quality but can still be of special interest.

2.20 *Selectivity:* Where a building qualifies for listing primarily on the strength of its special architectural interest, the fact that there are other buildings of similar quality elsewhere is not likely to be a major consideration. However, a building may be listed primarily because it represents a particular historical type in order to ensure that examples of such a type are preserved. Listing in these circumstances is largely a comparative exercise and needs to be selective where a substantial number of buildings of a similar type and quality survive. In such cases, the Secretary of State's policy is to list only the most representative or most significant examples of the type.

2.21 *National interest:* The emphasis in this document is to establish consistency in selection to ensure that not only are all buildings of strong intrinsic national architectural or historic interest included on the statutory list, but also the most significant or distinctive regional buildings that together make a major contribution to the national historic stock. For instance, the best examples of vernacular buildings will normally be listed because they illustrate the importance of distinctive local and regional building traditions. Similarly, for example, some buildings will be listed because they represent a nationally significant but localised industry, such as shoemaking in Northamptonshire or cotton production in Lancashire.

2.22 *State of repair:* The general state of repair and upkeep of a building will not usually be a relevant consideration when deciding whether it meets the test of special architectural or historic interest. The Secretary of State will list a building that has been assessed as meeting the statutory criteria, irrespective of its state of repair. Loss of original fabric will, however, be a relevant consideration when considering special interest.

Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment (Historic England 2008)

2.23 The *Conservation Principles Policies and Guidance* (English Heritage, 2008) defines the significance of a place as:

‘The sum of the cultural and natural heritage values of a place, often set out in a statement of significance’.

It goes on to state that:

A ‘statement of significance’ of a place should be a summary of the cultural and natural heritage values currently attached to it and how they inter-relate, which distils the particular character of the place. It should explain the relative importance of the heritage values of the place (where appropriate, by reference to criteria for statutory designation), how they relate to its physical fabric, the extent of any uncertainty about its values (particularly in relation to potential for hidden or buried elements) and identify any tensions between potentially conflicting values.

and that:

To identify the cultural and natural heritage values of a place, its history, fabric and character must first be understood. This should include its origins, how and why it has changed over time (and will continue to change if undisturbed), the form and condition of its constituent elements and materials, the technology of its construction, any habitats it provides, and comparison with

similar places. Its history of ownership may be relevant, not only to its heritage values, but also to its current state.

2.24 The guidance states that to identify the significance of a place, it is necessary first to understand its fabric, and how and why it has changed over time; and then to consider:

- who values the place, and why they do so;
- how those values relate to its fabric;
- their relative importance;
- whether associated objects contribute to them;
- the contribution made by the setting and context of the place; and
- how the place compares with others sharing similar values.

Understanding and articulating the values and significance of a place is necessary to inform decisions about its future. The degree of significance determines what, if any, protection, including statutory designation, is appropriate under law and policy.

2.25 Paragraphs 35-60 within the 'Understanding the Values' section describes a range of heritage values, arranged in four groups, which may be attached to places. These are:

- Evidential value: the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity.
- Historical value: the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present – it tends to be illustrative or associative.
- Aesthetic value: the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place.
- Communal value: the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory.

3.0 Historical development

Introduction

- 3.1** The following section presents a historical development of the subject building through the results of a map regression exercise and review of relevant background documentation, including historic plans and relevant planning decisions.

Historical Background

Stone Hall: summary

- 3.2** Stone Hall is a Grade I listed country house (NHLE 1286412) in the parish of Balcombe in West Sussex. No documentary evidence has been found to confirm the date of construction of the house, beyond the description in Historic England's listing which dates it to around 1700, with elements from earlier periods including a back staircase and iron fire-back dated 1598. Historic England's listing text describes it as the 'Dower House' for nearby Balcombe Place, and formerly occupied by the Bray family. However, this description appears to be misleading based on the available documentary evidence, and Pevsner's description of it as 'Surprisingly always a farmhouse.' Pevsner also describes it as 'A quietly perfect late C17 brick house, nothing specially inventive yet everything satisfying.'¹
- 3.3** After descending through the Bray and Chatfield families, the lands that comprised the Balcombe Estate were purchased in the mid-19th century by John Alexander Hankey, who initially lived at Naylands but then commissioned the construction of nearby Balcombe Place.² Stone Hall was at this point just one of the farms comprising the estate, and remained a tenanted farm until its sale to Sir Weetman Pearson (Lord Cowdray) in 1905, who gifted the estate to his daughter Lady Gertrude Denman. Stone Hall continued to be let to tenants during the first half of the 20th century, until after the Second World War when it was settled on Lady Denman's granddaughter, Penelope Anne Greenwood, who remains in residence.

Ownership and Occupation of Stone Hall

- 3.4** An unfinished report compiled as part of the Historical Manuscripts Commission held at East Sussex Record Office (ESRO) lists the Balcombe Estate papers held in the Balcombe Estate Office (ESRO AMS 6991/1/5/70). These include a conveyance in 1571 from George Culpeper of Balcombe of 16 acres of land called Firmine in Balcombe (believed to be part of Stone Hall) to John Braye and then an Inquisition postmortem following the death of John

¹ Pevsner p 126

² Historic England, List Entry Number: 1025775

Braye in 1592. No further papers appearing to relate to Stone Hall are listed in the document. Although no documentary evidence has yet been found to confirm the descent, and it isn't mentioned by name in the will of John Braye (1581, PROB 11/63/417) it seems likely that Stonelands/Stone Hall remained in the hands of the Bray family and descended by inheritance through to the Rev Henry Chatfield (d. 1819), incumbent of Balcombe Parish, via his grandmother Sarah Bray.³

- 3.5** Although the property is not mentioned by name in the will of Henry Chatfield's father John Chatfield (ESRO Pbt 1/1/63), it does include a reference to 'undivided messuages or tenements land and premises ... in the parishes of Balcombe ...', a phrase that appears in relation to Stone Hall in later documents.
- 3.6** By 1779, a 'Farm called Stonehall or Stonelands in Ardingly and Balcombe' is included in the marriage settlement of the Rev Henry Chatfield (later incumbent of the parish of Balcombe) and Elizabeth Clutton (West Sussex Record Office (WSRO) Add Mss 44589 – 44590). And in 1799, Rev Henry Chatfield obtained a land tax redemption on undivided third part of a farm 'formerly called by Stonelands and Fermine but now by Stonehall', which is described as a capital messuage, barn, buildings, outhouses and land of 140 acres in the occupation of John Comber (WSRO SAS-F/28).
- 3.7** The same 'undivided third part ... and in all that Capital messuage or tenement, barns, buildings, outhouses, farms, lands ...commonly called ... Stonelands and Fermine and then ... lately by the name of Stonehall ... late in the tenure of Thomas Barden and John Comber' is also named in the will of Rev Henry Chatfield (PROB 11/1615/162). At his death in 1819, Chatfield's estate also included the significant properties of Balcombe House and Naylands in the parish of Balcombe as well as multiple farms in the parish and neighbouring parishes. He left his estate to his widow Elizabeth and surviving daughters, Mary, Harriett and Caroline. In 1826, Balcombe House along with the adjoining farms that had become part of the Balcombe Estate were advertised for sale in the Morning Post, 10th June 1826;

VALUABLE FREEHOLD and COPYHOLD ESTATES, lying compact, and advantageously situate in the parishes of Balcombe, Ardingly, and Cuckfield, a fine sporting part of the county of Sussex, intersected by the new and excellent turnpike road to Brighton, by Red Hill, Worth and Balcombe, and bounded by the navigable river Ouse, about thirty-three miles from London, four from Cuckfield, and eighteen from Brighton; comprising an excellent Family Residence, called BALCOMBE HOUSE, erected on a delightful eminence in beautiful park-like grounds, ornamented with a red variety of fine timber, pleasantly grouped and scattered, and refreshed by an expansive lake well stored with fish, and skirted by coppice woods, large walled gardens with

³ VCH Sussex vol 7 pp132-6

*suitable forcing houses, orcharding and fish ponds, and the adjoining farms of Bowders, Naylands, **Stone Hall**, Bachelors, Pearments, Edmonds, Woodward, Cooper's Corner, West-up, Brook, Spicers, &c.; containing altogether near two thousand acres of meadow, pasture, arable, and wood land, well adapted for the growth of oak timber, and abundantly stocked with game, particularly pheasants; suitable farm houses, and husbandry buildings. Part now in the occupation of Messrs. Steynuing, W. Turner, Coomers, Potter, Holman, Booker, Mitchell, Ewart, and Ewens, yearly tenants, at low and reduced rents; the remainder held in hand with the house, forming a most desirable residence for a respectable family, or a Gentleman fond of field sports. Immediate possession may be had. Part of the Copyhold is subject only to small fines certain, consequently equal in value to Freehold.*

- 3.8** However, papers held at WSRO indicate that Mrs and Misses Chatfield mortgaged much of the Balcombe Estate, including Stone Hall, to William Lambert in December 1826 for £11,000 and interest (WSRO Add Mss 44594-5). And at the time of the Tithe Survey in 1839 (Figure 4), the house, marked as Stone Hall Farm (hereditament 455), is recorded as being owned by Elizabeth Chatfield and occupied by Thomas Comber (TNA IR TNA IR 30/35/17 & IR 29/35/17).
- 3.9** Although no documentary evidence of the sale of the Balcombe Estate to John Alexander Hankey has been identified so far, he is known to have purchased the estate and commissioned the building of Balcombe Place⁴. John Alexander Hankey died in 1866, and the estate was inherited by his son Blake Alexander Hankey. The latter died in 1899. The same bundle of papers at WSRO also includes a plan of the estate in the parish of Balcombe dated 1899 (WSRO Add Mss 44669). Blake Alexander Hankey was unmarried and without children. The residue of his estate was left to his brother Rodolph but was sold shortly after.
- 3.10** Thomas Comber, the tenant farmer of Stone Hall at the time of the Tithe, was at least the second generation of the Comber family to hold the lease of Stone Hall Farm; his father John Comber, being the named tenant in 1799 and 1806 (WSRO SAS-F/28; Add Mss 44592 – 44593). Census records show that over the next four decades Stone Hall was occupied by three successive generations of the Comber family, with the tenancy passed down from father to son, until the 1880s and the house serving as the farmstead for Stone Hall Farm for much of this time. Thomas Comber's son William is recorded in the 1851 census as a farmer of 190 acres. A newspaper article from 1852 ('Melancholy suicide of a farmer' *Morning Advertiser*, 4 Oct 1852) indicated that Comber had given up the farm, the lease of which was taken by John Pennifold, the unfortunate farmer in question. However, Combers appear to have remained at Stone Hall itself as in the 1861 and 1871 censuses, William Comber and family are recorded as resident there, with William's occupation given as land steward and bailiff [for the Balcombe Place estate]. William died

⁴ www.balcombeplace.com

in 1871 and his role is in turn taken on by his son William (jnr), who is recorded at Stone Hall, as a farm bailiff overseeing 284 acres, in the 1881 census. William (jnr) retired from his position in 1881, and settled in Haywards Heath where he became an auctioneer. His retirement was marked by a dinner at the Half Moon Inn attended by twenty local farmers and friends, and reported by the *Mid Sussex Times*, stating that the Comber family had lived at Stonehall [sic] for over 100 years.⁵

3.11 After William Comber left, the new tenant farmer at Stone Hall was George Bates (1891 census) who retired in 1898 and the tenancy of the farm presumably changed hands briefly as in 1900 the farm was valued and the outgoing tenant farmer named as Charles Claridge (ESRO BMW/A/2/97), although it is unclear as to whether he occupied the house. At the time of the 1901 census the house's tenant was estate agent Hugh M. Baker, along with his wife, daughter and three servants.

3.12 Following the death of Blake Alexander Hankey in 1899, the ownership of Stone Hall as part of the Balcombe Estate also changed hands and its new owner was Edwin Tate.

"The Balcombe Place estate has been bought by Mr. Edwin Tate, of London, son of the donor of the Tate Collection and the Picture Gallery at Westminster, and a member of the great firm of sugar refiners." Sussex Agricultural Express, 02 May 1899

Edwin Tate was the son of Sir Henry Tate of the sugar firm Tate & Lyle. His ownership of the Balcombe Estate was short lived as it was bought in 1905 by Sir Weetman Pearson, 1st Viscount Cowdray. Stone Hall Farm was valued again at the point of sale although the valuation excluded the house. The rental value of the farm, excluding the house, was assessed at £170 (ESRO BMW/A/2/149).

3.13 Pearson (later Lord Cowdray) had bought Balcombe Place and the Balcombe Estate for his daughter Lady Gertrude 'Trudie' Denman née Pearson. Shortly after purchasing the estate the four cottages to the west of Stone Hall were built for Lord Denman in 1906 (Figure 8) and improved by Lady Denman in 1918. The 1906 deposited plans, held at WSRO show the outline of the house, its outbuildings and the farm buildings (WSRO RC/CU/16/1/2 – 83, 155]

3.14 In the Valuation Office Survey of 1910, Stone Hall, one of the four terraced cottages and a field to the NW of the house were assessed as hereditament number 76 in 3 parts. The description states that the plot also includes stables and coach house [TNA IR 124/1/43 & IR 58/40187].

⁵ *Mid Sussex Times*, 28 September 1881

- 3.15** Both Stone Hall and Balcombe Place (assessment number 90 which included all of the farm buildings and surrounding land at Stone Hall) are recorded by the Valuation Office surveyors as being owned freehold by Lord Cowdray. However, in practice, Lord Cowdray's daughter Trudie Denman, had made Balcombe Place her country home from 1905, although from 1911-1914 the Denmans were out of the country whilst Lord Denman served as Governor General of Australia.⁶
- 3.16** The Valuation Office field book indicates that a site visit took place on 12 March 1913 and the surveyor described the house as in good condition but also as a 'very old-fashioned property'. It was noted as having electric light throughout and hot water radiation. The first floor contained five bedrooms (2 large, 2 medium, 1 small) and the downstairs a sitting hall, morning room, small drawing room, dining room, kitchen, larder, butler's pantry as well as boot and wine cellars, WC and woodshed. The dining room was noted as having an 'old chimney corner'. Stone Hall was initially leased to the Grants on a 7-year lease dating from 25 December 1906; Nellie Grant being a friend of Lady Denman who became one of her closest companions.⁷ A later amendment to the field book entry notes that J.G.H. Grant was replaced as the occupant by J.A.H. Stansfeld (TNA IR 58/40187).
- 3.17** James A.H. Stansfeld is recorded as the occupant of Stone Hall in the 1911 census, along with his wife Dorothy, school age son and daughter, five servants and the school age daughter of the cook. James Ashurst Healey Stansfeld was a Brewery Director from London, who later turned to farming. By 1921, the Stansfeld family had moved to Kent.
- 3.18** Stone Hall's new occupants recorded in the 1921 census are 27-year-old Evan Cadogan 'Eric' Smith, his wife Beatrice 'Helen' Smith nee Williams and four servants. Smith was the son of Lindsey Eric Smith, a banker of the Smith banking dynasty. Through his father he was also a second cousin twice removed of Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother. In the 1921 census Smith's occupation was recorded as Indian Merchant as in 1920 he had become a partner in the firm Hoare Miller & Co⁸ having served as a Captain in the 9th Lancers⁹ during the First World War. He was awarded the Military Cross in 1918. Eric Smith later followed his father into banking and the 'family firm'.
- 3.19** By the beginning of the 20th century there were five Smith family banks which would, through mergers, become part of National Provincial Bank, of which Eric Smith later became Chairman. He also became Chairman of Rolls Royce.

⁶ Thomas Denman (1874–1954), *Australian Dictionary of Biography*

⁷ Huxley, p32

⁸ London Gazette, 20 Aug 1920

⁹ 29 Dec 1917, Evan Cadogan Eric Smith to Beatrice Helen Williams, Marriage Register St George Hanover Square, Westminster Church of England Parish Registers STG/PR/7/84

Their daughter, Ann ‘Fortune’ Smith (1920-2021), possibly born at Stone Hall¹⁰, later married Hugh Dennis Charles Fitzroy 11th Duke of Grafton, becoming Duchess of Grafton. She served as Mistress of the Robes to Queen Elizabeth II from 1967 until her death in 2021.¹¹ One of their sons was Sir John Smith, Conservative MP, director of Coutts & Co, deputy chairman of the National Trust from 1980-95 and, with his wife, founder of the Landmark Trust.¹²

- 3.20** By 1934 the Smith family had left Balcombe and moved to Ashfold in Sussex. The 1934 Valuation List for the parish records the occupant of Stone Hall as Major W.J. Agar (WSRO RD/CU/34/1). On the eve of the Second World War, the occupants of Stone Hall were Richard and Audrey Graham-Vivian (1939 Register). Richard Graham-Vivian MC MVO was a long-standing officer of arms at the College of Arms holding several heraldic offices including Bluemantle Pursuivant, the Windsor Herald, and the Norroy and Ulster King of Arms. He served in the army in both the First and Second World Wars and was awarded the Military Cross in 1919.¹³
- 3.21** During the Second World War the house was offered by Lady Denman as an “Emergency Rest Centre for Nervous Mothers and Children.” Lady Denman, who owned Balcombe Place (and Stone Hall) from 1905 is perhaps best known as the first head of the Women’s Institute Movement and which she led for thirty years.¹⁴ She was also a pioneer of family planning and during the Second World War became the Honorary Director of the Women’s Land Army (WLA) having served as the WLA’s Assistant Honorary Director during the First World War.¹⁵
- 3.22** Several photos of the house, both interior and exterior, from this time are held at the Historic England Archive (see below). Opened in October 1940, “nervous” mothers and young children were evacuated to Stone Hall for a recuperation period of two to three weeks, before being settled in billets or cottages in the district. Fifteen mothers and over twenty children were accommodated in the centre in December 1940, which had already housed 120 mothers.¹⁶ Similarly, Balcombe Place became the de facto headquarters of the Women’s Land Army.
- 3.23** After the war Lady Denman handed over the running of the Balcombe Estate to her daughter [Anne] Judith Burrell née Denman.¹⁷ Lady Denman died in

¹⁰ 22 May 1920, Baptism of Ann Fortune Smith daughter of Evan Cadogan Eric and Beatrice Helen Smith of Balcombe, Slaugham Parish Register, WSRO Sussex Parish Registers Par 483/1/2/4. Although baptised in Slaugham, the family’s address in the parish register is given as Balcombe.

¹¹ <https://www.tatler.com/article/queens-mistress-of-the-robies-died-duchess-of-grafton-obituary>

¹² <https://www.natwestgroup.com/heritage/people/john-smith.html>

¹³ <https://www.thepeerage.com/p7405.htm#i74050>

¹⁴ https://www.thewi.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0006/498264/The-WI-at-100.pdf

¹⁵ Huxley; <https://www.womenslandarmy.co.uk/running-the-wla-lady-denman/>

¹⁶ Historic England Archive MED01-/01/1128-38

¹⁷ Huxley, p 194

1954. Balcombe Place was then used for multiple purposes during the second half of the 20th century including a school, a conference centre and care home. It is now under the management of Denman descendants, along with the Balcombe Estate and used as a venue. Before her death, Lady Denman passed Stone Hall and the Balcombe Estate home farm over to her granddaughter Penelope Greenwood née Burrell who still lives in the property.¹⁸

Alterations

- 3.24** The earliest available mapping clearly illustrating the historic planform of Stone Hall is the 1839 Balcombe Parish Tithe map (Figure 4). The building at this time is sub-rectangular in form with a projecting wing on its south-west corner. Its principal (east elevation) is formed by two further projecting bays on the north-east and south-east corners of the façade. Recorded as StoneHall Farm on the Tithe, the principal house and ancillary buildings to its west are clearly legible as an historic farmstead that addresses a central courtyard /farmyard at the centre of the plot and has numerous paths and trackways radiating out to the surrounding fields.
- 3.25** Between the Tithe mapping of 1839 (Figure 4) and Ordnance Survey mapping of 1897 (Figure 7), there is no discernible change to the planform of Stone Hall. In the immediate environs of Stone Hall, many of the barns and ancillary buildings to its west have been extended with new ranges having been added. Several smaller buildings have also been constructed to its immediate west and north. Within the wider environs of Stone Hall, the greatest change is in the form of Balcombe Place, which was constructed in 1856 and located c. 240m north-east of the subject building. Between 1949 and 1953 (Figure 9) minor alterations were made to several of the buildings on the site including the conversion of the laundry to a dwelling house and construction of new sheds (WSRO RD/CU/18 MF 671 ff50-63: F/49/339 & F/52/63).
- 3.26** By the mapping of 1956-1958 (Figure 9), there is a level of alteration that has taken place to the subject building, principally on its north-west corner. A block is shown as having been added to the historic core of the building. This may relate to anecdotal evidence from the current occupiers of the property, who noted that a smaller structure was attached to the north elevation of the building and was subsequently taken down prior to substantial extension to the building being constructed in the mid-1960's.
- 3.27** In the 1960s, the architects Phillimore & Jenkins were commissioned to design an extension for the Greenwoods which stretches to the west of the original house in two ranges (Figure 10 and 14). The drawings for these works, copies of which are held at the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) Study Room at the Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A) (RIBA PA773/3-4), indicate minimal

¹⁸ Huxley

changes to the original house at the time of these works aside from those necessary to join the new building to the old. Over 60 drawings are held in the RIBA collection, although the vast majority relate to details such as radiator coverings, bookshelves and cupboards. However, a set of floor plans, a block plan (PA773/4/25) and an existing site survey are also included in this collection.

Planning History

- 3.28** The online planning register only includes one application from 2016 relating to Stone Hall (DM/16/0946) comprising minor internal alterations to the attic space. A 1975 application for the construction of 6 stables is also listed but no documents are attached, and the two remaining applications relate to works in the grounds rather than the house.
- 3.29** A pre-1990 Planning History Card was supplied by Mid Sussex Planning Department. Original copies of documents are held on microfiche and only viewable by appointment in person at the council offices. The majority of applications listed on the planning card relate to works to the farm area and grounds including for a grain silo, improving the access road, petrol storage tank. Two applications (F64/635 and F64/636) relate to residential developments of 13.5 acres and 9 acres respectively.
- 3.30** Those relating to the house itself are for the conversion of a laundry into a dwelling (F49/359) and conversion of the western extension 'to provide staff flat, guest rooms/drawing room/playroom' (F64/342) and (F64/341/1). Copies of the architects' drawings relating to the 1960s extension by Phillimore & Jenkins were identified at the RIBA Archive and held at the RIBA Study Room at the V&A.

4.0 Physical description and assessment of significance

Background

- 4.1** This section assesses the heritage significance of the subject building against the criteria used by DCMS and Historic England to assist in determining significance. The significance assessment draws on the historical development included above (section 3) and has been informed by a physical survey covering the interior and exterior of the subject building.
- 4.2** The Grade I Stone Hall (NHLE 1286412) was listed on 28th October 1957 and was constructed during the late 17th century. The historic core of the building dates from the late 17th century and is oriented on a north-east – south-east axis with its principal elevation being the east. The historic core of the building was substantially extended during the mid-1960's with a likely completion date being 1967 based on a dated carving on the central north-west elevation. The listing citation for the asset is as follows;

BALCOMBE HAYWARDS HEATH READ 1. 5405 Stone Hall TQ 32 NW 11/378 28.10.57 I 2. The dower-house of the Balcombe Place estate. Late C17 house formerly occupied by the Bray family. Two storeys and attic. Seven windows. Centre portion of 3 windows and 2 dormers and projecting wings of 2 windows and one dormer each. Red brick and grey headers on a stone base. Stone stringcourse and long and short quoins to the wings. Wooden modillion eaves cornice. Horsham stone slate slab roof with hips over the wings. Casement windows with wooden mullions and transoms and small square panes. Doorway with rectangular fanlight having small square panes, curved pediment like a hood and door of 6 fielded panels. Contemporary staircase and older panelling.

- 4.3** It should be noted that Stone Hall was similarly recorded in the 1965 publication of 'The Buildings of England' by Ian Nairn and Nikolaus Pevsner (see section 3). Based on a review of the most current version of 'The Buildings of England' dating to 2003, the physical description of the building remains the same and makes no reference to the 1960's addition to the asset.

Description

Exterior

Stone Hall: Principal (east) elevation

- 4.4** As previously noted, the subject building can be divided into two distinct phases of construction, that of the original core of the building which dates to the late c. 17th century and north-west range which dates to the mid-1960's. The approximate configuration of these two phases is illustrated in Figure 14.

The principal elevation of the historic core of the building faces approximately east and overlooks its landscaped garden plot and has wide ranging views out to the surrounding landscape.

- 4.5** The principal (east) elevation (Plate 1) of Stone Hall was historically accessed from a trackway and path leading from the east, passing to the north of the landscaped gardens. The current timber entrance door on this elevation is centrally set between the two protruding bays on the north-east and southeast corners of the building and is topped by a rectangular over-light and recessed curved pediment. Both the door and over-light have small leaded glazed panes. The principal access to the building is now from the courtyard to the west through a more modern entrance way.
- 4.6** The east elevation is 2.5 storeys in height and divided into seven window bays with projecting wings on the north and south of the elevation. It is raised in an orange brick with blue vitrified headers and laid in a Flemish bond. The brickwork is formed on a coursed sandstone block base. This local sandstone is further utilised in the form of a broad string course at first floor level and in the formation of prominent V-jointed quoins on the corners of the building. The eaves are relatively decorative and consist of a timber moulding beneath a boxed fascia and soffit with timber modillions forming a corbel table. The roof is covered with Horsham stone tiles and punctuated by three pitched dormers with clay tile cheeks. Rising above these and set centrally within the building are two fluted brick chimney stacks with corbelled tops and clay pots.
- 4.7** The fenestration of this section of the building is symmetrically laid out at ground and first floor level and consists of timber framed casement windows with segmented glass panes. The panes are held in position by a mixture of timber and iron glazing bars. On the whole, rainwater goods consist of cast iron hoppers, gutters and downpipes.
- 4.8** Overall, the integrity of the principal (east) elevation of the historic core of the building is largely uncompromised by later change and considered to be in a relatively good state of preservation.



Plate 1

Principal (east) elevation of the historic core of Stone Hall which dates to the late 17th century.

Stone Hall: North-east elevation

- 4.9 The defining character of the east elevation of the historic core of the building is defined by its clay tile hanging which stretches from the coursed sandstone base up to eaves level (Plate 2). Fenestration consist of four large symmetrically laid out timber framed casement windows with segmented glass panes. The panes are held in position by a mixture of timber and iron glazing bars. Unlike the principal (east) elevation, the eaves are relatively plain in character with only the painted rafter ends visible which support the Horsham stone tile roof above.
- 4.10 From this location, the mid-1960's addition to the building is clearly apparent and interfaces with the historic core at ground and first floor level but is relatively subordinate to the more historic form of the building in both massing and materiality.
- 4.11 Excluding the addition of the mid-1960's extension to the building, the integrity of north elevation of the historic core of the building is largely uncompromised by later change and considered to be in a relatively good state of preservation.



Plate 2

North-east elevation of Stone Hall. The image illustrates the point at which the historic core of the subject building (left arrow) and the 1960's extension interface (right arrow).

Stone Hall: South elevation

- 4.12 The south elevation of the historic core of the building (Plate 3), largely mirrors the principal (east) elevation in terms of form and materiality. Two storeys in height, but without dormers, the elevation is divided into five window bays with the eastern most being blind at ground and first floor level. Raised in an orange brick with blue vitrified headers and laid in a Flemish bond. The brickwork is formed on a coursed sandstone block base, which due to the sloping topography, is more apparent than on the eastern elevation. On its south-west corner is a modern (20th century) brick buttress which anecdotally relates to subsidence of the building.
- 4.13 The local sandstone used in the base of the elevation is again used to form a broad string course at first floor level and in the formation of prominent V-jointed quoins on the corners of the elevation. The decorative timber detailing of the soffit, fascia and modillions on the east of the building continues round onto this elevation, supporting the Horsham stone tiled roof above. Prominent within this roofscape is one of the large, fluted brick chimney stacks with its corbelled top and clay pots.
- 4.14 Similar to the previous elevations, the integrity of south elevation of the historic core of the building is largely uncompromised by later change and considered to be in a relatively good state of preservation.



Plate 3

South elevation of the historic core of Stone Hall, noting the modern (20th century) brick buttress on the south-west corner of the range (arrowed).

Stone Hall: South-west elevation

- 4.15 This elevation is dominated by the form of the southern range which forms part of the mid-1960's extension to the building (Plate 4). Two storeys in height and arranged into four window bays, the materiality of the elevation is characterised by timber weatherboarding rising from a coursed sandstone base replicating the wall base of the more historic section of the building. The eaves of the elevation have exposed rafter ends which support a Horsham stone tile roof. The fenestration is symmetrically set out at ground and first floor levels and consists of double-glazed timber framed casements.
- 4.16 The eastern end of this range connects to the historic core of the building at ground and first floor levels which includes a timber framed covered way with Horsham stone tile roof at ground floor.
- 4.17 Overall, the form this mid-1960's extension appears to be largely uncompromised by later additions or alterations and is considered to be in a relatively good state of preservation.



Plate 4

South-west elevation of Stone Hall showing the timber clad 1960's extension to the historic core of the subject building.

Stone Hall: West elevation

- 4.18** The western elevation (Plate 5) is set back from the main courtyard in a recess created by the north and south ranges of the mid-1960's extension to the historic core of the building. Continuing the style and materiality of the southern elevation, it is characterised by timber weatherboarding rising from a coursed sandstone base up to eaves level. This section of the building is slightly lower (2 low storeys and attic space) and includes two small dormers with pitched Horsham stone roofs. The eaves have uPVC gutters set in front of the exposed rafter ends which support the Horsham stone tile roof. Fenestration is not symmetrical and consists of double-glazed timber framed casements. At ground floor level, there are two porched entrance doors which is now the principal access into the building. Set centrally between the doorways at first floor level is a carved date plaque monogrammed *1967, JRG, PAG*, presumably commemorating the construction date of this mid-1960's addition to the building.
- 4.19** The overall form of this section of building appears to be largely uncompromised by later additions or alterations and is considered to be in a relatively good state of preservation.



Plate 5

West elevation of Stone Hall. The central courtyard is formed by the two timber clad ranges that were constructed during the 1960's. This period of construction is commemorated by a carved date plaque (centre of image) and monogrammed 1967, JRG, PAG.

Stone Hall: North elevation

The north elevation (Plate 6) of the building continues the style and materiality of the preceding mid-1960's extension to the building with their timber weatherboarding and coursed sandstone base. Height wise, the majority of this section of the building is more similar to the southern range. Two storeys reducing to a single storey at its eastern end. Four window bays along the two storey section and two window bays on its single storey eastern end. The eaves have exposed rafter ends which support the Horsham stone tile roof. Fenestration is symmetrically set and consists of double-glazed timber framed casements.

- 4.20** The overall form of this northern elevation appears to be largely uncompromised by later additions or alterations and is considered to be in a relatively good state of preservation.



Plate 6

North elevation of Stone Hall. The weatherboarded sections date from the 1960's with the prominent brick chimney stack of the historic core of the building visible above the ridge line (arrowed).

Stone Hall Cellars – Historic core

- 4.21** There are two cellars which are both located beneath the historic core of the building, one approximately under the south-west corner of the building and the other set centrally beneath the Old Hall. Both are principally accessed by staircases internal to the building. The external walls are formed by the coursed sandstone block walls (Plate 7) that are visible from the outside of the building and divided internally by coursed brick walls. The ceiling of the more southerly of the two cellars has a ceiling formed by brick vaulting (Plate 8). The more central of the cellars has a ceiling formed by the timber flooring of the Old Hall and the main central staircase which leads from the first floor (Plates 9 – 10). Much of the timber framework of the historic core of the building is concealed behind walling and plasterwork but is exposed in several areas of the cellars. This gives an insight into the wider structural form and materiality within the historic core of the building which is less evident in other areas.



Plate 7

View down into the southerly of the two cellars which are located beneath the historic core of the subject building. Note the timber studwork on the right of the image which has been exposed and springs off of a coursed sandstone block wall.



Plate 8

Image of southern storeroom in southern cellar. Note the storage on the right of the image which is formed with modern concrete blockwork.



Plate 9

View down into the northerly of the two cellars. This image shows the underside of the of the main staircase which leads from the Old Hall up to first floor level. Note that these stairs are relatively modern (20th century) based on their materiality and method of construction.



Plate 10

Image detailing the ceiling structure of the more northerly of the two cellars. The image illustrates that the floor above (that belonging to the Old Hall) has possibly been replaced (c. mid-1960's) with modern circular saw cut beams (left arrow) set into the historic (c. C17) adze hewn timbers (right arrow). The floorboards above have also been backed with hardboard panels.

Stone Hall Ground Floor – Historic core

- 4.22** Overall, the internal layout of the principal rooms in the historic core of the building appears to have changed little since the original construction date. It is possible that a level alteration has taken place to the rooms surrounding the existing main staircase when it was altered during the mid-20th century. This would have created several storage rooms through the insertion of stud walling which in some areas have had the historic wood panelling altered to create jib doors.
- 4.23** Few of these principal rooms within the historic core of the building have any obvious fixtures or fittings or structural elements that would indicate the age of the building (Plates 11 – 14). The rooms have been largely re-plastered throughout, though they appear to retain some of their lathe and plaster ceilings. Those historic elements that are most apparent are the retained fireplaces in the office, sitting room and Old Hall. However, in the case of the office and sitting room, these have been partially re-built. The fire surrounds in the Old Hall and Playroom possibly date from the earlier part of the building's history and are of more significance. It should be noted however that much of the historic fabric of the building, be it structural or decorative will likely be concealed in whole or in part by later finishes to the building.

- 4.24** Of these principal rooms, the Old Hall retains much of its decorative fixtures and fittings and is considered the most sensitive to change due their significance. However, as previously noted the staircase is a later addition (c. mid-1960's). The room does retain the principal entrance way to the building on the east elevation which leads out the gardens. The flooring appears to have been replaced, but this would need to be confirmed by an examination of the underside of the floorboards by removing a section of the hardboard within the cellars. It should be noted that at the time of the site visit it was not possible to inspect the floor finishes beneath the carpeted areas and there is the possibility that there are historic floorboards and timberwork beneath.
- 4.25** Throughout these rooms a wet heating system has been installed as have modern electrics. The installation of these systems appears to have occurred at different points ranging from the early 20th century to the late 20th century.
- 4.26** Overall, these rooms are considered to be in a relatively good state of preservation, though several of the windows are in need of easement and redecoration.



Plate 11

View south-west in the sitting room illustrating the historic inglenook fireplace. Note that the brick hearth has been re-built at a later date.



Plate 12

View north-west in the Old Hall illustrating the historic oak panelling and exposed structural timberwork. Note that the staircase has been largely re-built and likely dates to the mid-1960's.



Plate 13

View north-east in the Playroom.



Plate 14

View south-east in the Office. Though the fireplace and corresponding flue are historic and connect to one of the principal chimney stacks, the brick hearth and surround have been re-built.

Stone Hall Ground Floor – Mid-1960's extension

- 4.27** During the mid-1960's Stone Hall was substantially extended with the construction of an H-shaped wing to the north-west (Figure 14) creating a new kitchen (Plate 18), pantry, dining room (Plates 19 – 20), boot hall, plant room (Plate 17), WC's and drawing room (Plate 15) at ground floor level. The two principal rooms of this extension are considered to be the Drawing Room and Dining Room.
- 4.28** The Drawing Room consists of modern plaster walls with a painted finish and wall lights which appear to be more historic in date. The coffered ceiling is relatively decorative and formed in white plaster. Suspended centrally in the room is a large chandelier with glass or crystal lustres. The marble fire surround on the northern wall appears to be of a much earlier date. If confirmed, it may have some inherent significance in its own right, though it is not contemporaneous with the room. The panelled timber doors that lead into the room are modern and give access to the New Hall (Plate 16). Similarly, the timber panelling in this room is modern. On the northern wall is a carved family crest, the date and provenance of which has not been confirmed.
- 4.29** The Dining Room is of a similar materiality and has a domed plain plaster ceiling. The walls are modern plaster with a painted finish. Flooring consists of modern timber floorboards. At the eastern end of the room are modern sliding doors which open out towards the gardens. Immediately to the west of the

Dining Room is the kitchen area which includes a pantry and storage rooms beyond. All fixtures, fittings are distinctly modern.

- 4.30** Whilst all of these rooms have been finished in a sensitive manner, often taking their materiality from the more historic parts of the building, they are considered to have very limited value in heritage terms.
- 4.31** Overall, the rooms within the mid-1960's extension to the core of the building are considered to be in a good state of preservation.



Plate 15

View north-east in the Drawing Room. This room was constructed during the mid-1960's when the building underwent major alterations to its planform. The ornate marble fire surround does however appear to date from an early period.



Plate 16

View north-east in the New Hall. This room was constructed as part of the mid-1960's alterations to the building.



Plate 17

Image of the existing main electrical intake panels in the Boiler Room. This plant room was created during the mid-1960's and houses boilers, hot water storage tanks and various other M & E related plant.



Plate 18

View south-east in the subject building's principal kitchen area. This room was constructed as part of the mid-1960's alterations to the building.



Plate 19

View north-east in the Dining Room. This room was constructed as part of the mid-1960's alterations to the building.



Plate 20

View north-west in the Dining Room illustrating the domed plaster ceiling which was created as part of the mid-1960's alterations to the building.

Stone Hall First Floor – Historic core

- 4.32** Similarly to the layout of those rooms on the ground floor of the historic core of the building, the historic planform of the principal rooms at first floor level is still partly legible. However, a level of alteration to wall lines has occurred to allow for the installation of several bathrooms and toilets and possibly a second staircase.
- 4.33** As with several rooms at ground floor, the principal rooms at first floor in the historic core have do not have any obvious fixtures, fittings or structural elements indicating the age of this part of the building. The rooms have been largely re-plastered throughout, though they appear to retain some of their lathe and plaster ceilings (Plate 21). Those historic elements that are most apparent are the retained fireplaces in the south-east corner bedroom and the central bedroom (Four Poster). However, in both cases, the timber fire surround is of later date (c. mid-C20). All doors and their surrounds are modern and of no value in heritage terms. It should be noted however that much of the historic fabric of the building, be it structural or decorative will likely be concealed in whole or in part by later finishes to the building. This includes the flooring underneath carpeted areas which were not inspected as part of the site visit.
- 4.34** As with the ground floor, a wet heating system has been installed as have modern electrics. The installation of these systems appears to have occurred

at different points ranging from the early 20th century to the late 20th century.

- 4.35** Overall, these rooms are considered to be in a relatively good state of preservation, though several of the windows are in need of easement and redecoration.



Plate 21

View west in the south-east corner bedroom. Note that the doors and surrounds are of a later date (c. mid-1960's). The hearth space is of an earlier date, but the timber fire surround likely dates to the mid-1960's. The undulating nature of the ceiling indicates that it is of lathe and plaster and more historic in nature.

**Plate 22**

View north in the central bedroom (Four Poster). Note that the door and its surround are of a later date (c. mid-1960's). The hearth space is of an earlier date, but the timber fire surround likely dates to the mid-1960's. The ceiling has a Trompe-L'oeil decorative finish of clouds and sky. The date of this is unknown, but based on its condition, it is unlikely to be particularly historic in nature and contemporaneous with the other wall finishes.



Plate 23

View north in the north-east corner bedroom. Note that the doors, their surrounds and the fitted units are of a later date (c. late C20).



Plate 24

View west from the landing at the approximate point where the historic core joins the mid-1960's extension to the building.

Stone Hall First Floor – Mid-1960's extension

- 4.36** Similar to the ground floor rooms in the mid-1960's extension to the historic core of the building, the rooms at first floor level consist of modern plaster walls and ceilings with a painted finish. All fixtures and fittings including the doors and their surrounds are also modern and of no value in heritage terms.
- 4.37** Whilst this section of the building does not contain any historic fabric, where the historic core and mid-1960's extension interface at first floor level, there may be significant historic fabric in close proximity that may be impacted by any work in this area.
- 4.38** Overall, the rooms within the mid-1960's extension to the core of the building are considered to be in a good state of preservation.



Plate 25

View east in the central bedroom of the southern range of the mid-1960's extension to the building. All fixtures and fittings date from this period or later.



Plate 26

View north in the north-east corner bedroom of the northern range of the mid-1960's extension to the building. All fixtures and fittings date from this period or later.

Stone Hall Second Floor - Historic Core

- 4.39** The upper (second floor) of the historic core of Stone Hall was recently renovated (c. 2016) to create bedrooms and a living space. While much of the modern ceiling, wall and floor finishes are of no value in heritage terms, a large amount of the timberwork that forms the historic roof structure is still visible. This includes structural posts, trusses and collar beams as well as purlins running the length of the roof space. These are connected in a variety of ways including mortise and tenon joints, several of which have carpenter's marks (Plate 27). This allowed the framework to be worked and fitted together on the ground before being brought up to roof level to be fitted in the correct configuration.
- 4.40** A number of historic door apertures still exist between the vertical studding, some of which retain their historic wooden plank door leaves. There is also evidence that much of the interior surfaces between this studding and on the underside of the principal rafters had a lathe and plaster finish to them, with several of the posts and rafters having a painted or lime washed coating (Plate 27).
- 4.41** Although much of the space is now carpeted, the small plant room containing a water tank off to the side of the central room has exposed Oak floorboards, indicating much of the roof space was boarded out in this fashion (Plate 29). An assessment of the timberwork in the most northerly of the spaces indicates that the original roof space had been altered to accommodate the dormers

and create a larger room within the roof space (Plate 30). A number of the timbers in the roof space show signs in the form of notches, that there were connecting timbers that have been removed or that they have come from another building. Some of this may relate to the 2016 alterations, though some would likely have been where roof timbers or dividing studding needed to be replaced due to its degradation through historic water ingress.

- 4.42** As with other areas of the building, a wet heating system has been installed which is modern as are the electrics and lighting. Overall, these rooms are considered to be in a good state of repair and preservation.



Plate 27

View east along the second-floor landing towards the south-east corner attic room bedroom. Note the exposed historic timber framing on the left of the image which likely dates to the c. 17th century. The linear marks on the timber studding indicate that this once had a lathe and plaster covering (left arrow). Carpenter's marks are also apparent on the supporting beam beneath (right Arrow).



Plate 28

View north in the central attic bedroom illustrating the timber framework construction of the roof with exposed collar beams, purlins and posts.



Plate 29

View west into the modern tank room. The interior of the roof has been close boarded in this location with modern materials, though the floorboards are more historic in nature.



Plate 30

View south-east in the northern attic bedroom. This image illustrates how several different techniques have been employed in the construction of the roof in this location. The slotted beam (arrowed) appears to have come from another structure and been inserted into the roof structure to aid in opening up the space and act as a tie beam., possibly at a later date to when the roof was originally constructed.

Historical Value / Associative value

- 4.43** Although the architect of Stone Hall is unknown, it derives historical value from a variety of sources which includes the material fabric of its structure and the illustrative value of this in terms of historic building practices in the latter half of the 17th century as well as its historic and functional relationship to the nearby Grade II* listed Balcombe Place (NHLE 1025775).
- 4.44** Historical connections to John Alexander Hankey, a prominent Victorian merchant and plantation owner in the West Indies, who commissioned the architect Henry Clutton to construct the nearby Balcombe Place in 1856, generates a moderate level of associative value. John Alexander Hankey bought Balcombe estate sometime in the mid-19th century, which included Stone Hall and was owned by the family until the death of his son, Blake Alexander Hankey in 1899. A further level of associative interest is generated by the purchase of the estate in that year by Edwin Tate, the son of Sir Henry Tate of the sugar firm Tate & Lyle.
- 4.45** A greater level of historic and associative value is provided following the sale of the estate in 1905 to Sir Weetman Pearson, 1st Viscount Cowdray, a prominent local landowner and politician. Pearson (later Lord Cowdray) had bought Balcombe Place and the Balcombe Estate for his daughter Lady

Gertrude 'Trudie' Denman née Pearson. During the Second World War, Stone Hall was offered by Lady Denman as an "Emergency Rest Centre for Nervous Mothers and Children." Lady Denman, who owned Balcombe Place (and Stone Hall) from 1905 is perhaps best known as the first head of the Women's Institute Movement which she led for thirty years. She was also a pioneer of family planning and during the Second World War became the Honorary Director of the Women's Land Army (WLA) having served as the WLA's Assistant Honorary Director during the First World War.

- 4.46** Opened in October 1940, "nervous" mothers and young children were evacuated to Stone Hall for a recuperation period of two to three weeks, before being settled in billets or cottages in the district. Fifteen mothers and over twenty children were accommodated in the centre in December 1940, which had already housed 120 mothers. Similarly, Balcombe Place became the de facto headquarters of the Women's Land Army.
- 4.47** For the above reasons, it is considered that Stone Hall has a high level of historical and associative value.

Aesthetic Value / Architectural value

- 4.48** The aesthetic/architectural value of Stone Hall resides primarily in architectural special interest generated by the historic core of the building which dates to the late 17th century. The core of the building is a good example of a type of small country house designed to a variation of the Palladian style which were becoming popular and being constructed in the latter half of the 17th century, by such architects as Colen Campbell.
- 4.49** The overall integrity of the north, east and south elevations of the historic core of the building are largely uncompromised by later change and are considered to generate a high level of aesthetic and architectural significance. As a whole, these elevations and their material form are in a relatively good state of preservation. A further level of significance is provided by Stone Hall's association and proximity to several of the other more historic ancillary buildings located in the immediate vicinity. These other buildings consist of a mixture of barns, kennels, smaller outbuildings and dwelling houses. All of these significantly contribute to the immediate setting of Stone Hall by providing an historic ancillary and functional context. The wider environs of Stone Hall largely consist of open agricultural land to the west interspersed with blocks of mature woodland and hedge lined fields and lanes. Located c. 235m to the north-east is the Grade II* listed Balcombe Place (NHLE 1025775) which has historic and current connections to Stone Hall. The fields, gardens and parkland associated with Balcombe Place form the rural context of Stone Hall to the north and east and positively contribute to its significance through the provision of an historic rural/agricultural context.

4.50 Internally, the historic core of Stone Hall and its internal layout appears to have changed little since the original construction date. This is particularly relevant to the ground floor. It is possible that a level alteration has taken place to the rooms surrounding the existing main staircase when it was altered during the mid-20th century. However, few of the principal rooms within the historic core of the building have any obvious fixtures or fittings or structural elements that would indicate the age of the building except where historic timberwork has been left exposed in the cellars and attic rooms. Many of the rooms have been re-plastered, though many appear to retain some of their historic lathe and plaster ceilings. Other more historic elements of the building consist of the retained fireplaces in the office, sitting room and Old Hall. However, in the case of the office and sitting room, these have been partially re-built. The fire surrounds in the Old Hall and Playroom possibly date from the earlier part of the building's history and are of more significance. It should be noted however that much of the historic fabric of the building, be it structural or decorative will likely be concealed in whole or in part by later finishes to the building. The extant structural timberwork within the building is considered to contribute to the high level of architectural significance of the building by providing an insight into historic building techniques and choice of materials in the latter half of the 17th century.

4.51 Regarding the mid-1960's extension to the north-west corner of the building, it is considered to have been executed in a sensitive manner in terms of the palette of materials used and the way in which it is oriented. The higher elements of the extension, namely the northern and southern ranges are largely absent in key views of the principal (east) elevation of the historic core of the building. The set-back nature of the extension and the way in which it reduces in height to a single storey to the immediate north of the historic core ensure that it does not compete visually with the core.

4.52 Due to its date of construction and materiality, this section of the building is not considered to contribute to the historic and architectural special interest of the historic core of Stone Hall. Whilst it is acknowledged that it is illustrative of continued occupation of the building and is clearly legible as a separate phase, it makes a very limited contribution to the high level of significance of the building as a whole. Furthermore, with the construction of the extension, the historic usage patterns and materiality of the western elevation of the historic core of the building has become less legible following its alteration and loss of historic fabric. This in turn is considered to have had a negative effect on the architectural significance of the building.

Evidential Value

4.53 While a detailed archaeological assessment is beyond the scope of this report, excavation associated with future works such as new buildings / structures or trenching for cabling and pipework, may uncover evidence associated with the site's previous occupation.

Statement of Significance: Summary

- 4.54** Stone Hall has been described and analysed against the listing criteria for its typology as outlined by Historic England's guidance. It is considered that Stone Hall retains a high level of historic, illustrative, associative and architectural value, which principally relates to the historic core of the building.
- 4.55** Few of the principal rooms within the historic core of the building have any obvious fixtures or fittings or structural elements that would indicate the age of the building except where historic timberwork has been left exposed. It is likely that more historic fabric, be it structural or decorative will be concealed in whole or in part by later finishes to the building. For this reason, all of the principal rooms within the historic core of the building are particularly sensitive to change or alteration. The most sensitive internal areas of the building are the Old Hall and attic rooms due to the large amount of clearly identifiable historic fabric. However, any proposed works within the historic core of the building should be carefully considered, so as not to disturb any extant historic building fabric. This may take the form of utilising existing ducts, cable routes and voids within the building. Similarly, any external works to the building should take into account potential impacts that they may have on the architectural and aesthetic value of the building and its setting.
- 4.56** The mid-1960's extension to the building is considered to have very limited to no value in heritage terms. For this reason, future internal alteration, or reconfiguration within this section of the building is unlikely to have a negative impact on the high level of significance of the historic core of the building. However, works that are proposed at the point where this extension interfaces with the historic core should be carefully considered so as not to disturb any historic building fabric. As with any external works to the historic core of the building, any proposals to the exterior of the mid-1960's extension will need to be carefully considered in terms of the visual impact that they may have on the architectural and aesthetic value of the historic core of the building or its setting.

5.0 Summary and Conclusions

- 5.1** In accordance with government policy (*National Planning Policy Framework* 2023) and guidance (Historic England's *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance* 2008), this assessment outlines the historical development of the subject building, analyses its physical attributes and assesses the heritage significance of them in accordance with the listing criteria set out in *Principles of Selection for Listed Buildings* (DCMS, 2018). The latter document sets out the general principles that the Secretary of State applies when deciding whether a building is of special architectural or historic interest and should be added to the list of buildings compiled under the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act* 1990. Reference has also been made to the guidance contained in Historic England's publication *Listing Selection Guide Domestic 3: Suburban and Country Houses Listing Selection Guide* (updated 2017).
- 5.2** The Grade I listed Stone Hall (NHLE 1286412) has been described and analysed against the listing criteria for its typology as outlined by Historic England's guidance. It is considered that Stone Hall retains a high level of historic, illustrative, associative and architectural value, which principally relates to the historic core of the building. Any proposed works within the historic core of the building should be carefully considered, so as not to disturb any extant historic building fabric. This may take the form of utilising existing ducts, cable routes and voids within the building. Similarly, any external works to the building should take into account potential impacts that they may have on the architectural and aesthetic value of the building and its setting.
- 5.3** The mid-1960's extension to the building is considered to have very limited to no value in heritage terms. Future internal alteration, or reconfiguration within this section of the building is unlikely to have a negative impact on the high level of significance of the historic core of the building. It should be noted that works that are proposed at the point where this extension interfaces with the historic core should be carefully considered so as not to disturb any historic building fabric. Any external works will need to be carefully considered in terms of the visual impact that they may have on the architectural and aesthetic value of the historic core of the building or its setting.

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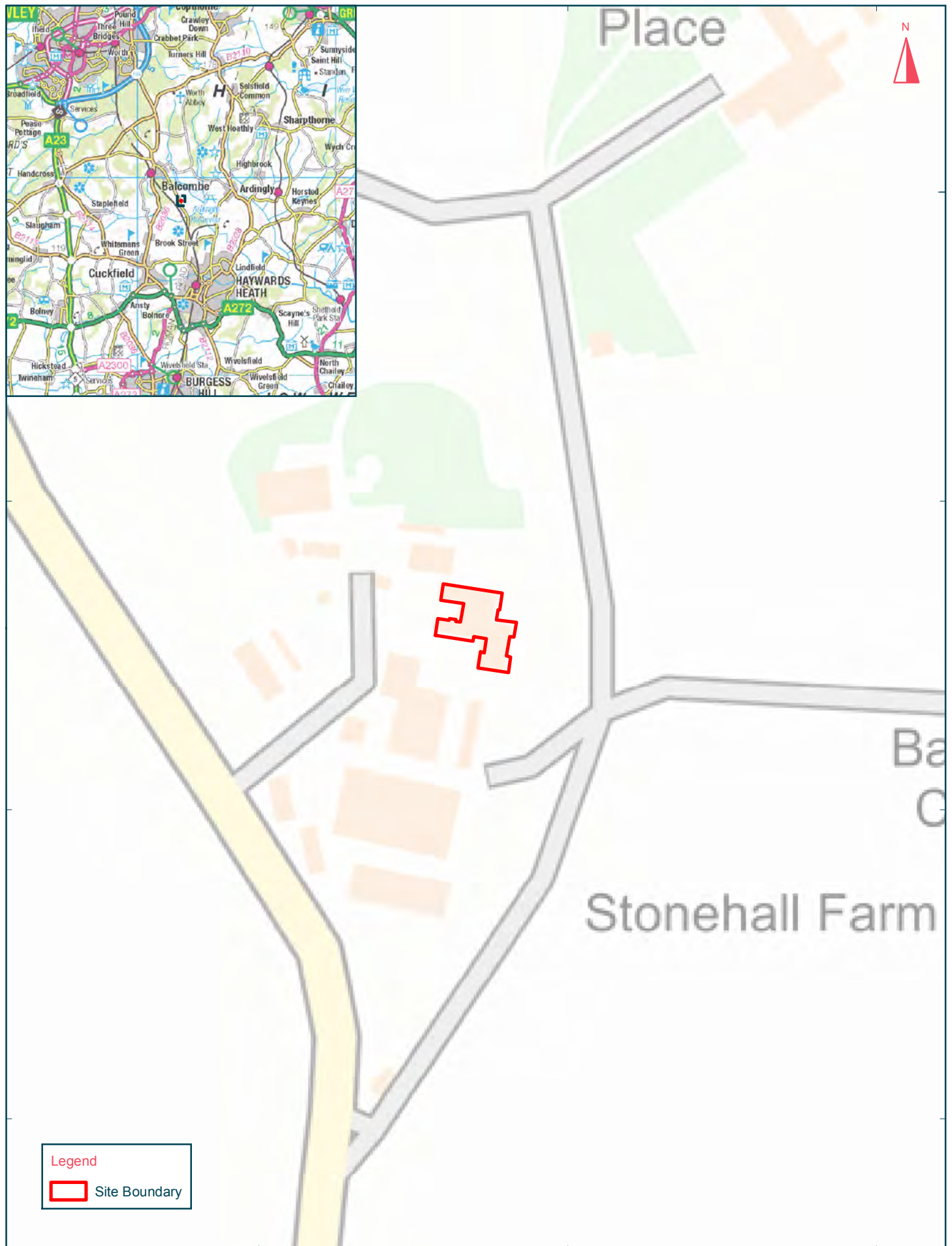
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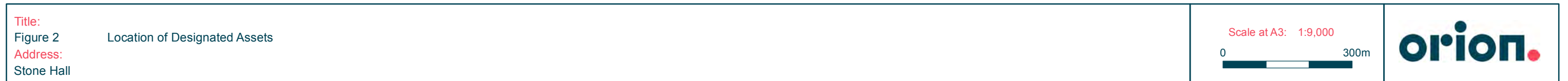
Appendix A



Title:
Figure 1: Site Location
Address:
Stone Hall

Scale at A4: 1:2,000
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Legend

 Site Boundary



Title:
Figure 3 Thomas Moule, Sussex 1837
Address:
Stone Hall

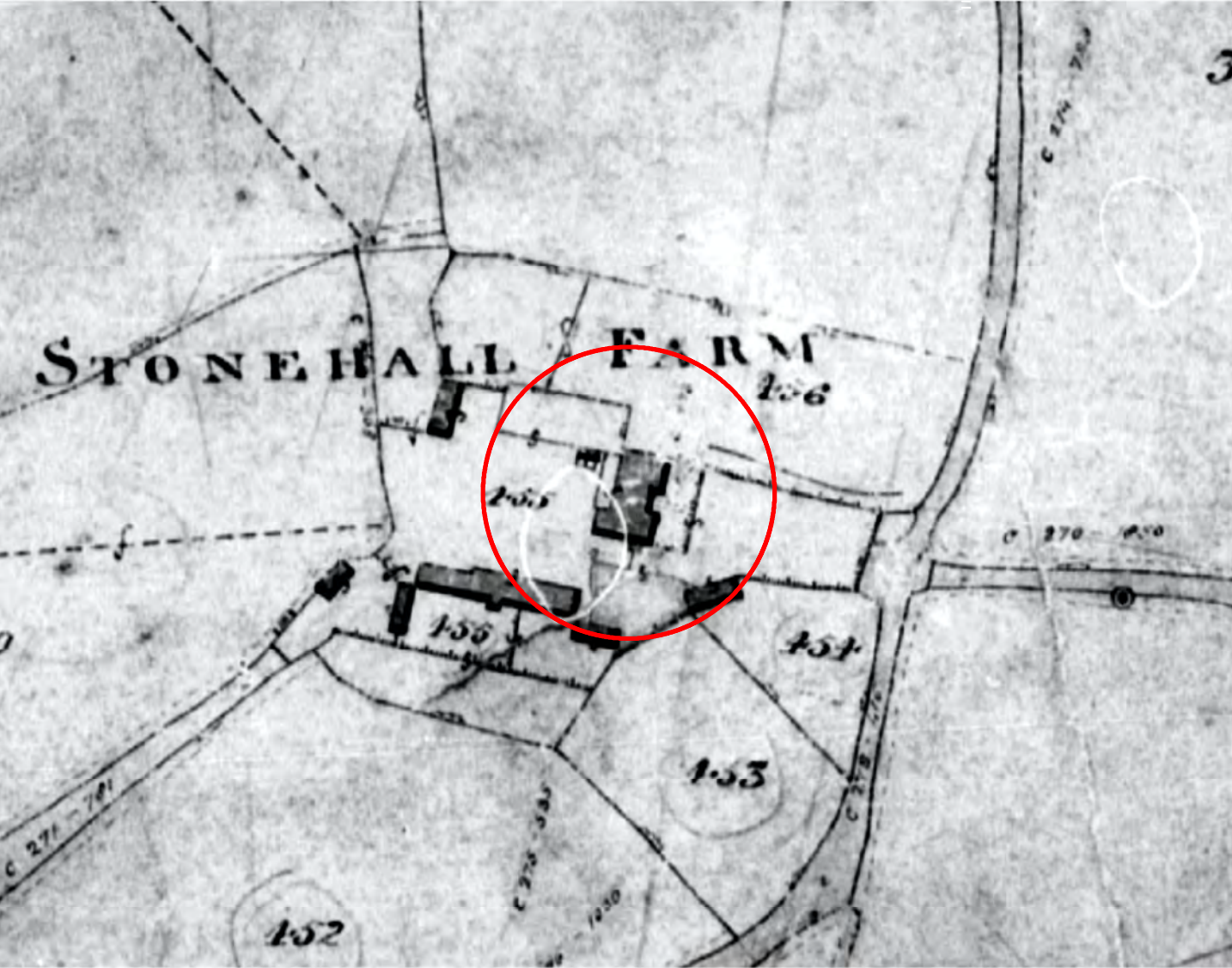
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Legend

 Site Boundary



Title:
Figure 4 1839 Balcombe Parish Tithe
Address:
Stone Hall

Not to scale.

