



*The Barns Hotel and Restaurant, Cocksparrow Lane,
Huntington, South Staffordshire.*

Level 2 Building Recording.

Client: Turn-Ell Ltd.

December 2019.

Report No. BR/thebarns/AH340/05/12/19V1

Prepared by:

Helen Martin-Bacon, MCIfA.



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REPORT ON A LEVEL 2 BUILDING RECORDING.

Site name: The Barns Hotel and Restaurant

Location: Cocksparrow Lane, Huntington, South Staffordshire NGR SJ 971130 (Figure 1).

Oasis ref: commerci1 371718

Report No: BR/thebarns/AH340/05/12/19V1

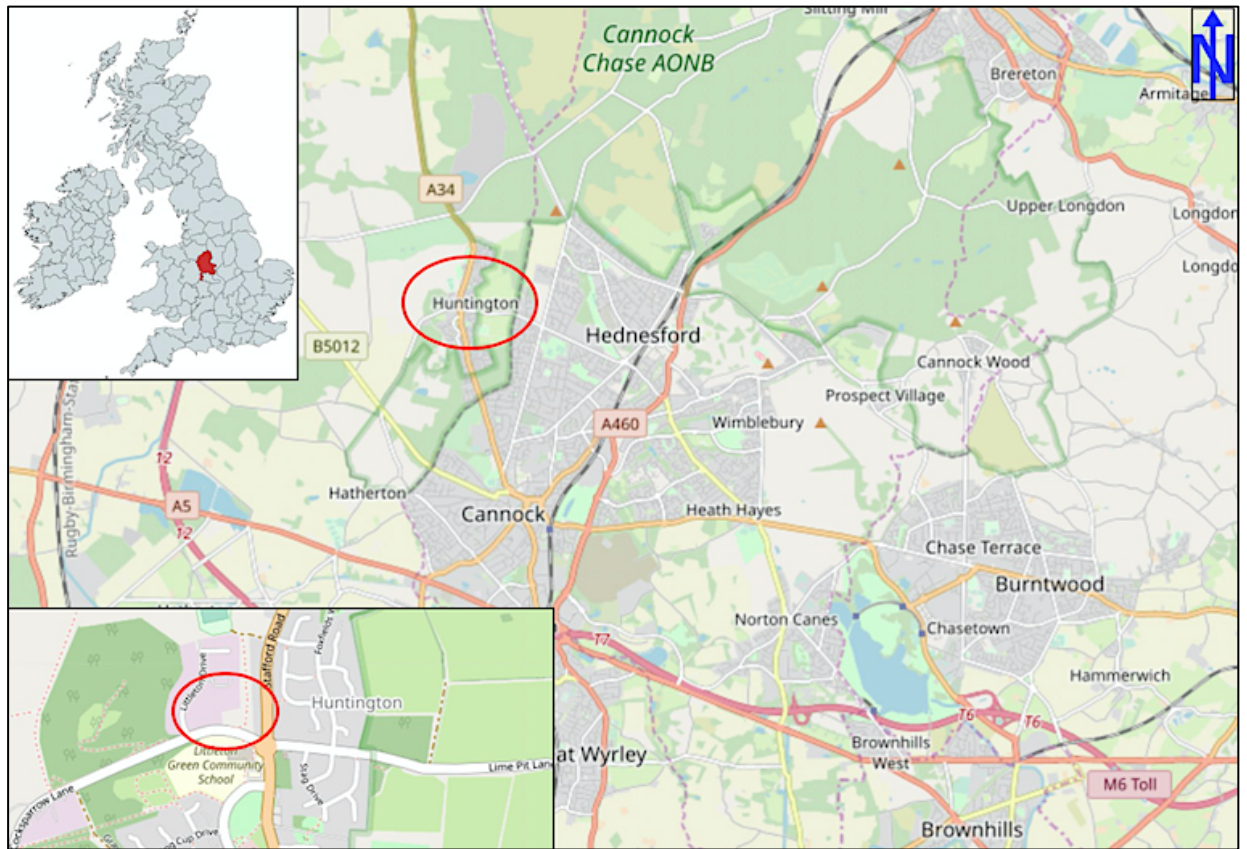


Figure 1. Location map.

Report Summary:

Planning consent has been granted by South Staffordshire Council (SSC, Planning Application No: 19/00589/FUL) for a hotel extension, creation of an amenities room and reconstruction of a derelict barn at The Barns Hotel, Huntington, South Staffordshire. The programme of building recording was undertaken on a derelict barn (Barn 3) and on a second partially converted barn (Barn 2, Figure 2). The consented conversion works will include a brick by brick reconstruction of the front elevation of Barn 3 as an architectural feature in front of an adjacent modern wing of the hotel. A third barn (Barn 1) which was to be included in the programme of building recording was demolished prior to recording due to a dangerous level of dilapidation and the presence of an asbestos roof.

However, photographs of Barn 1 prior to its demolition have been included in this report and it will be discussed as part of the general historic context of the site.

The level 2 building recording was carried out by Avalon Heritage Ltd and was required in order to provide a permanent record of the buildings prior to the alteration and reconstruction. Given their age and wider historic context within the curtilage of the grade 2 listed farmhouse, the barns were considered to be of heritage interest both individually and as a group.

The planning condition states:

No development shall take place within the application site until a scheme of archaeological building recording has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, and that scheme has been implemented. The scheme of recording must be prepared and carried out under the supervision and with the agreement of an archaeologist approved by the Local Planning Authority.

The approach taken by the LPA is supported by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which states that LPAs should require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage asset to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible.

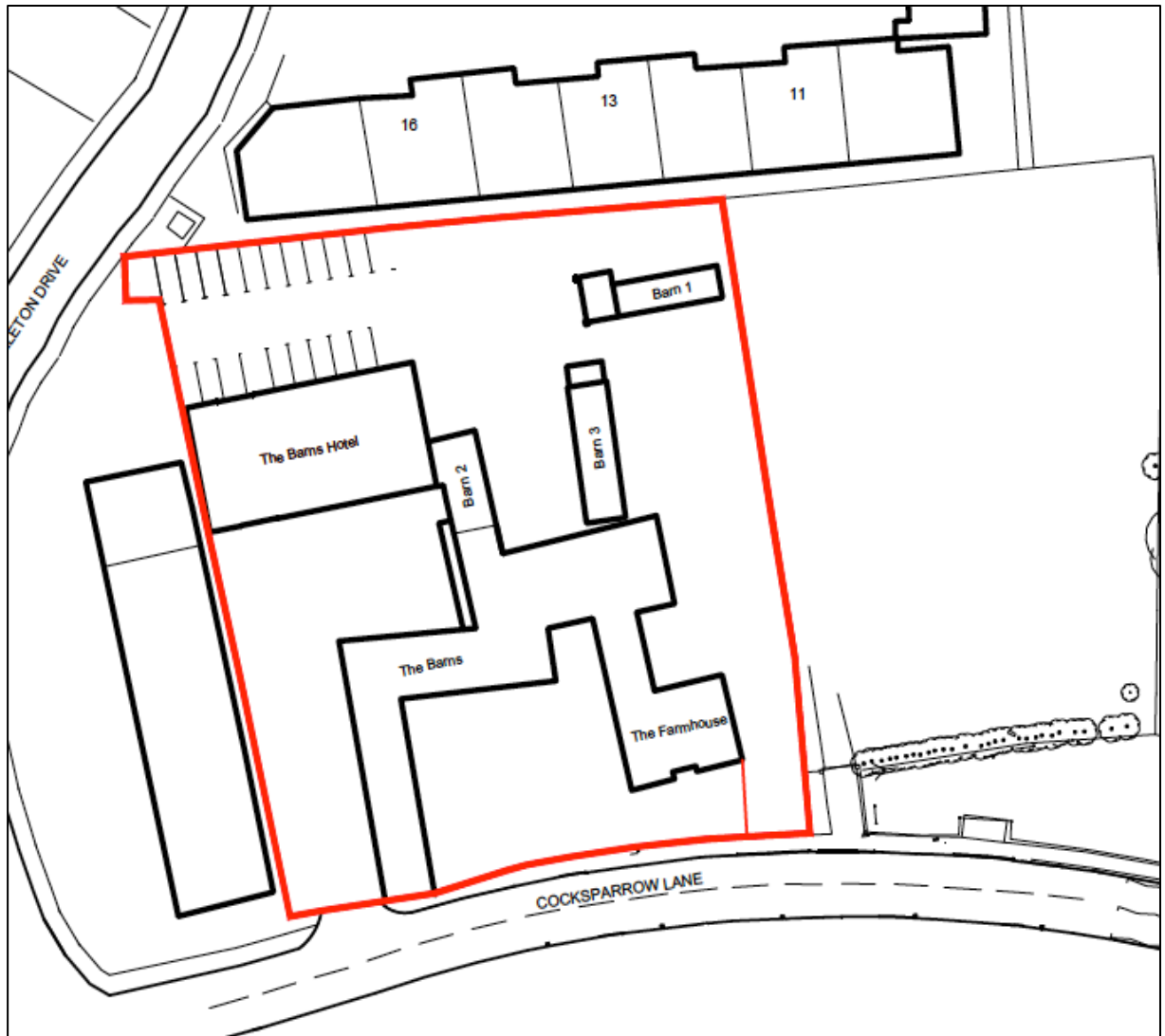


Figure 2. Site layout.

The methodology laid out in the approved WSI (AH, 2019) was followed throughout the course of the building recording. All work was undertaken in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) *Code of Conduct* and the relevant CIfA Standards and Guidance (revised 2014). In addition, all stages of the project were carried out in accordance with the requirements established in the Historic England publication *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (MoRPHE).

The guidelines and standards laid down in the following documents were adhered to:

- *Standards and Guidance for the Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings and Structures*, Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA): Reading (2014b).
- *Management of Archaeological Research Projects in the Historic Environment (Morphe): English Heritage now Historic England 2015*.
- *Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice: Historic England 2016*.

The WSI was written within the context of national guidance as laid out in the National Planning Policy Framework: Section 16 *Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment* (DCLG 2018 revised).

Project Aims:

The main aim of the building recording was to provide a permanent record of the historic barns prior to their alteration/reconstruction. The recording was primarily photographic and descriptive, but with an appropriate level of analysis and interpretation. The building recording report is aimed at contributing to an understanding of the development of the buildings and their historical use. The project includes, an appropriate level of analysis of floor plans, room use, changes of room use, and relationships of activities within the building, in so far as these could be determined.

The aims of the building recording included:

- To ascertain whether the current 19th century barns contained any evidence of earlier phases of building activity;
- To provide a record of the building and of any features or fixtures and fittings of historic interest which would be destroyed by the works;
- To provide a written account of the history and development of the barns;
- To set the barns within their historic context;
- To provide a record both photographic, drawn and written of the barns prior to their alteration/reconstruction;
- To disseminate the results of the building recording through an appropriate level of reporting and publication;

Methodology:

In accordance with the description of a level 2 building survey as defined in Historical England's volume *'Understanding Historical Buildings. A Guide to Good Recording Practice'* (HE 2016) the methodology applied at The Barns comprised a visual record supplemented by sufficient information and photographs to enable identification of the barns' location, age and type and to understand their development and use.

The survey consisted of external photographs and internal photographs with particular emphasis on architectural or historical fixtures and fittings which would be lost as a result of the proposed works. Recording consisted of:

- Annotation of existing floor plans;
- An overall photographic survey of the buildings in their present condition comprising general and detailed shots of the exterior of the buildings and interior shots of rooms and significant/historical features;
- Written notes on the buildings' construction, present and former use and layout;
- HER and cartographic research to set the buildings into context;

Historic Background:

The Barns is a group of 18th and 19th century farm buildings grouped around an 18th century brick farmhouse. The farmhouse is early 18th century in date and described as follows in the listing description:

Farmhouse circa 1700. Red brick; plain tile roof; brick ridge stack to east wing. Central range aligned east-west facing south with east and west cross wings, the former projects boldly to the north, both wings project slightly to

the south. 2 storeys and attic with storey bands and ovolo moulded eaves cornice. A pair of gabled crosswings flank a slightly recessed central range. 1:1:1 window, casements with segmental heads. Central early 19th century 6-panel door with fanlight and pedimented doorcase. Right hand wing has a depth of 4 bays; the 2 front bays are

blind but the 2 rear bays have glazing bar sashes. The left-hand wing is one bay deep with casements and a single storey 2-bay wing the rear.

A previous Heritage Appraisal of the farmhouse (Smith, I. 2019) established that the farmhouse retained many of its original features and much of its historic character and interest. The appraisal concluded that the house is a relatively rare survival of an early 18th century farmhouse and of high significance. Regarding the barns associated with the farmhouse the appraisal concluded that they are of limited significance in themselves but that as a group provide context to the house and explain its origins.

As expected from a large farm such as this the complex was originally set in open countryside which was characterised by dispersed sparse development. The Staffordshire Historic Landscape Character Analysis records that the application site is within an area defined as post 1880s settlement surrounded by a mix of plantations, 18th and 19th century semi planned enclosure and 18th and 19th century planned enclosure. The Staffordshire Historic Environment Record (HER) also records a large number of cropmarks which represent medieval and post-medieval field boundaries to the west and north west of the application site (PRN 59521). The application is now located next to an industrial estate but during the 19th century until the mid-20th century was situated opposite a large colliery which confined the farm to a narrow strip of land extending north between spoil heaps and railway sidings. The colliery is now gone but the spoil heaps remain as testament to its former existence. The application site is also recorded on the HER as Huntington Farm (PRN 52958) and is described as a farmstead laid out around a series of three regular courtyards with an attached farmhouse.

Cartographic evidence shows that by the late 19th century Huntington Farm comprised the main farmhouse and a number of farm buildings arranged in an L-shape around a yard. The farm buildings shown on this map do not appear to correspond with the current layout of the former farmstead. The map appears to depict a small northward projecting extension to the building behind the farmhouse, in the location of Barn 2, but does not depict the full extent of Barn 2. Similarly, the map does not show buildings in the locations of Barns 1 and 2.

By the time of the 1921 – 24 map the farmyard appears to have been reconfigured with the demolition of some of the farm buildings shown on the 1884 map. The buildings are now grouped around three yards and buildings are shown in the locations of Barns 1, 2 and 3. These buildings are depicted as having the same planform as the current buildings, although Barn 3 seems to extend further to the north to adjoin a building which appears to represent Barn 1. This suggests that the Barns 1,2 and 3 are early 20th century in date.

The 1968-1977 map depicts the farm surrounded by spoil mounds and infrastructure belonging to the colliery. The layout of the yard is essentially that shown on the 1925 map but with addition of several smaller buildings around the yard. Barns 1, 2 and 3 are clearly shown more or less in the form they are today.

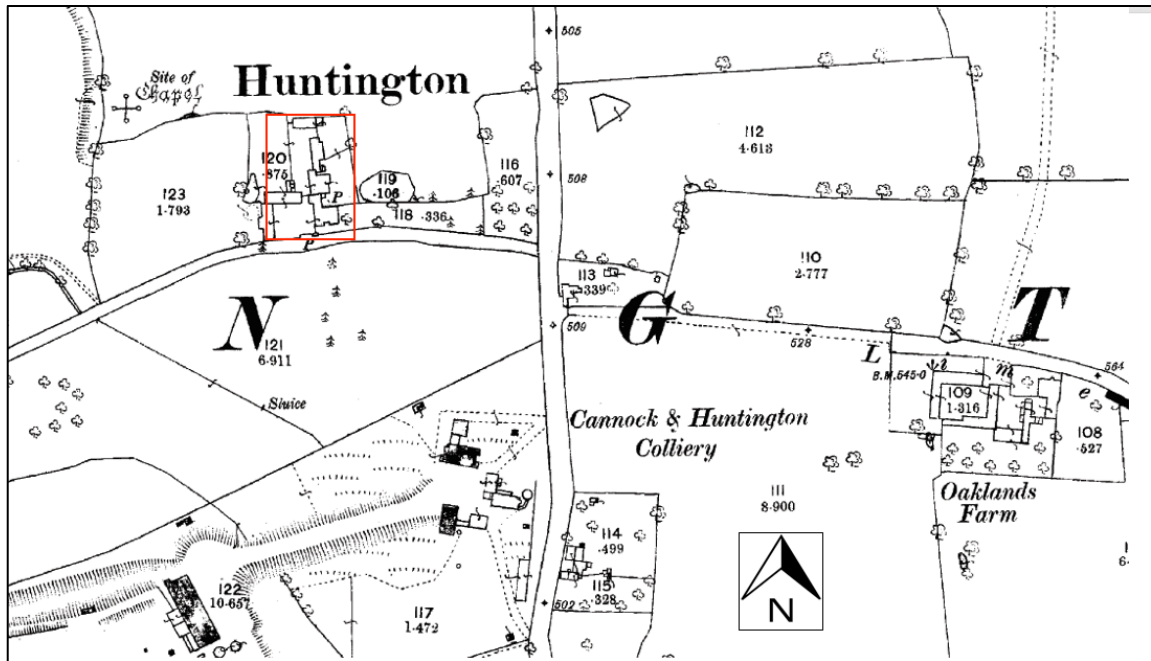


Figure 3. OS County Series: Staffordshire 1:2500 1884.

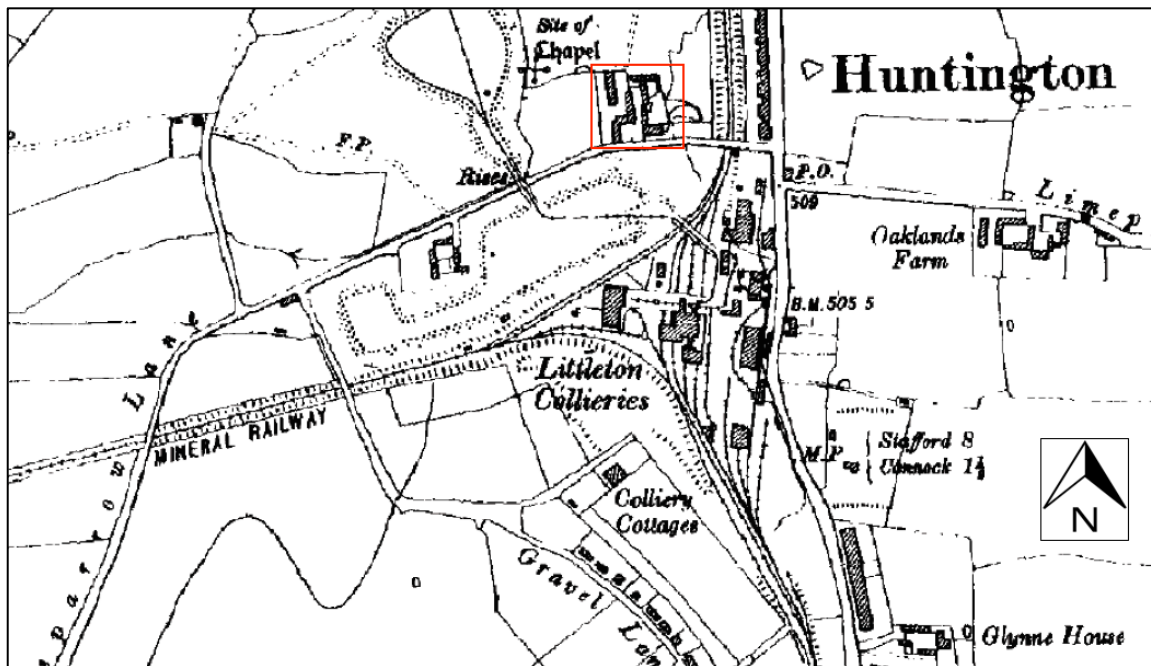


Figure 4. OS County Series: Staffordshire 1:10560 1921 – 1924.

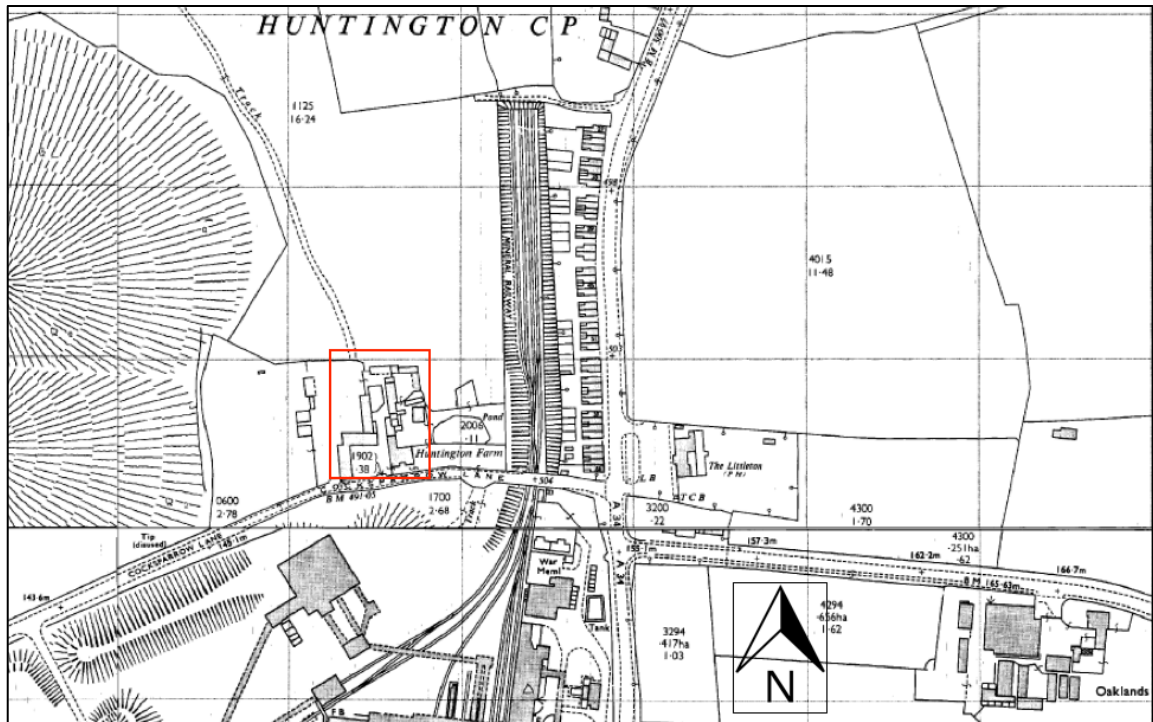


Figure 5. OS Plan 1:2500 1968 – 1977.

Description Barn 2 (see Appendix 1 for plans and elevations).

Barn 2 has a rectilinear planform, is single storey and constructed of red brick, the bricks being crude and handmade and jointed with lime mortar. The roof is low pitched and covered with blue tiles and topped with ridge tiles. The east facing elevation (Plate 1), which is the front elevation of the building, presents two wide stable doors with recessed segmental arches and original plank and batten doors with strap hinges on pintel hinges (Figure 6). There are two original windows to either side of the northern stable door comprising a wooden frame with transom and mullion glazing bars. Next to the southern stable door a modern window has been inserted to cater for the already converted southern half of the barn.



Plate 1. West facing elevation of Barn 2.

The west facing elevation is only partially visible but appears to be generally blank with only one original doorway at the north end of the elevation. Otherwise a second central doorway with an adjacent window are modern interventions arising from the conversion of the southern half of the barn. The only visible gable end of the barn is at the north of the building where this elevation (Plate 2) presents evidence of a blocked doorway to the west side of the elevation and retains an original timber framed glazed window in the upper part of the gable end. The large doorway with sliding door is a modern intervention. There is quoining on the southeast side of the elevation comprising blue bullnose bricks and the roof purlins project from under the roof.



Plate 2. Gable end of Barn 2.

Internally, the barn has been stripped of any original fixtures and fittings and has been partitioned from the converted half of the building by a breeze block wall. The floor is made of recently laid concrete. The roof timbers are machine cut softwood with trusses of jowelled king post construction (Plate 3). The trusses and wall plate sit back from the front of the walls suggesting the roof is later than the body of the barn. The interior of the east wall is half rendered whilst the whole interior has been limewashed. The stable doors are recessed with segmental arches constructed with headers. (Plate 4).



Plate 3. View of interior of Barn 2 looking south.



Plate 4. Detail of half rendered east wall with stable door.

The window in the upper half of the gable end has a fixed lower half with a mullion and transom but the upper half is a hopper (Plate 5).



Plate 5. Detail of hopper window in gable end of Barn 2.

Description of Barn 3.

Barn 3 is a free-standing building, constructed of crude handmade bricks and rectilinear in planform. The roof covering has been removed exposing the roof timbers and corbelled eaves. The west facing elevation is characterised by four doorways under segmental arched openings in headers and a doorway at the southern end of the elevation with a flat timber lintel (Plate 6). At the northern end of the barn a small extension with a pitched roof and narrow doorway adjoins the northern elevation of Barn 3. The brickwork suggests a later phase of building activity the bricks being less crude than those of Barn 3 and possibly machine made. The extension comprises a single celled room with a square hatchway in its north facing elevation (Plate 7). In addition, there is small square opening in the brickwork halfway up the northern wall of the extension. The extension to the barn is stepped out at the bottom of the walls and sits on a brick plinth. The west facing elevation of Barn 3 has been rendered along the lower part of the wall.



Plate 6. West facing elevation of Barn 3.



Plate 7. North elevation of extension to Barn 3.

Each of the arched doorways in the west facing elevation of Barn 3 give access to corridors delineated on each side by half brick walls with coping stones and timber partitioning above (Plate 8).



Plate 8. Example of corridor beyond arched opening.

Internally, Barn 3 is divided into five small cells which are part rendered and part limewashed. The two central cells retain feeding troughs constructed of rendered brick, with blue bullnose brick in soldier formation at the top of the troughs (Plate 8). The side of each trough comprises a squared sandstone block and it is possible that these represent part of the original construction of the troughs with the blue bullnose bricks being later patching where sandstone blocks have degraded. Between each trough is a low brick trough two courses high. To the side of the troughs are in-situ timber tying up posts with chains suggesting that each cell housed two livestock at a time.



Plate 8. Interior of one of the cells with feeding troughs and tying up posts.

The roof timbers and the partition timbers are oak and roughly squared. The trusses are supported by corbelled brick brackets and by the uprights of the partitions (Plate 9). Two of the roof timbers show carpenters marks suggesting the timbers may have prefabricated and brought into the site from elsewhere (Plate 10).



Plate 9. Detail of roof timbers.



Plate 10. Carpenters marks on two roof timbers.

The extension adjoining the northern elevation of Barn 3 does not contain any evidence of feeding troughs and may have served a different function. The presence of the taking in hatch in the gable wall suggests that it may once have had a loft and may mean that the building was used to store animal feed.

The west facing elevation of Barn 3 is characterised by three window openings (Plate 11). The two openings in the northern half of the elevation show that they have been inserted into blocked doorways which correspond with two of the corridors inside the building, showing that passage through the building was originally open from both sides of the building. The northernmost building comprises a mullion window frame with glazing between a timber lintel and cill. The adjacent window, a shutter window on wooden pegs, may have been related to ventilation (although in recent times pigeons were kept on the site and the shutter window may be connected to this activity).

There is a third window towards the southern part of the elevation which has a wooden frame and timber lintel. The window is divided into 6 glazed panes and typologically looks 1930s or 1940s in date.



Plate 11. East facing elevation of Barn 3.

The southern elevation of Barn 3 contains a square brick opening and a straight joint marking the western side of the gable end. This suggests that this part of the barn had been modified, extended or rebuilt at some time in the past.



Plate 12. Southern elevation of Barn 3.

Description of Barn 1.

From a photograph of Barn 1 taken by the owner of The Barns prior to the barn's demolition (Plate 13). It appears that Barn 1 comprised two phases of building activity with the original roof of the barn being replaced at some time by an asbestos roof. The south facing elevation of the barn also appears to have undergone later modification in terms of the large opening at the centre of the building leaving a small section of the original tiled roof at the west end of the building. The photograph suggests that there was a window opening directly beneath the eaves inserted into a blocked doorway at the western end of the barn. Barn 1 was also adjoined by a small squarish building on its west facing elevation. This building has the original pitched roof with blue tiles and ridge tiles. There is a single doorway into the building and there is a suggestion of a stub wall on the west corner of the elevation which may mean it once joined another building or structure. The brickwork looks to be the same as that used on the other two barns being generally stretcher courses with occasional headers as through bricks for wall support.



Plate 13. South facing elevation of Barn 1.

Interpretation and conclusion.

The cartographic evidence along with the form and design of the three barns suggests that they are early 20th century in date. There is no evidence within the fabric of Barns 2 and 3 to suggest that they incorporate any of the earlier buildings shown on the late 19th century map and it is likely that the latter buildings were demolished completely and then replaced by Barns 1, 2 and 3. This may be connected to a contraction in farming activity at Huntington Farm during this period or a change in agricultural practice. The fact that the farmhouse dates to the early 18th century indicates that at this time there would have been associated farm buildings, perhaps some of those buildings shown on the 1884 map date from the same period as the farmhouse. The high-status Georgian interior of the farmhouse suggests that the owners made a good living from farming.

All of the barns seem to have undergone various phases of building activity as evidenced by blocked doorways, inserted windows and particularly a replacement roof on Barn 2. The replacement roof over Barn 2 suggests that

the original roof must have been in a considerable state of disrepair and in this regard, it is attested to locally that because vibrations from the adjacent colliery damaged nearby buildings the Coal Board was often required to undertake repairs at its own expense.

In terms of the functions of the barns the only real clue to the use of Barn 2 is the presence of two stable doors. As no other internal features or fixtures and fittings are present the assumption has to be that Barn 2 functioned as a stable, maybe for heavy horses working the land. Barn 3 with its corridors, allowing access to filling feed troughs without entering the animal stalls, and the in-situ tie up posts indicate that it was used for housing livestock, most likely cows. It is difficult to identify the use of Barn 1 from the photograph but again the planform would suggest housing of livestock. Evidence from elsewhere in the complex of buildings at The Barns Hotel suggests that crops were processed on site. This is in the form of a large threshing barn (Plate 14) and granary at the side of the entrance into the hotel complex. Although much of the front elevation of this barn has been rebuilt in modern brick there is sufficient original brickwork at the southern end of the building to indicate that it was contemporary with the Barns 1, 2 and 3. The original full height double doors of the threshing barn have been replaced with modern timber infill and the opposing door has now been absorbed into the hotel.



Plate 14. Modified threshing barn showing east facing elevation.

In combination the evidence suggests that Huntington Farm originated in the early 18th century and continued as a farm into the earlier 20th century. During that time there were various phases of building activity including demolition of earlier buildings and their replacement by the extant buildings. The farmyard was also reconfigured at least twice during the history of the farm and it is likely that the different sequences of building activity represent changing farming practices and agricultural regimes over 200 years.

References.

Standards and Guidance for the Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings and Structures, Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA): Reading (2014b).

Management of Archaeological Research Projects in the Historic Environment (Morphe): English Heritage now Historic England 2015).

Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice: Historic England 2016.

APPENDIX 1

NOTES:

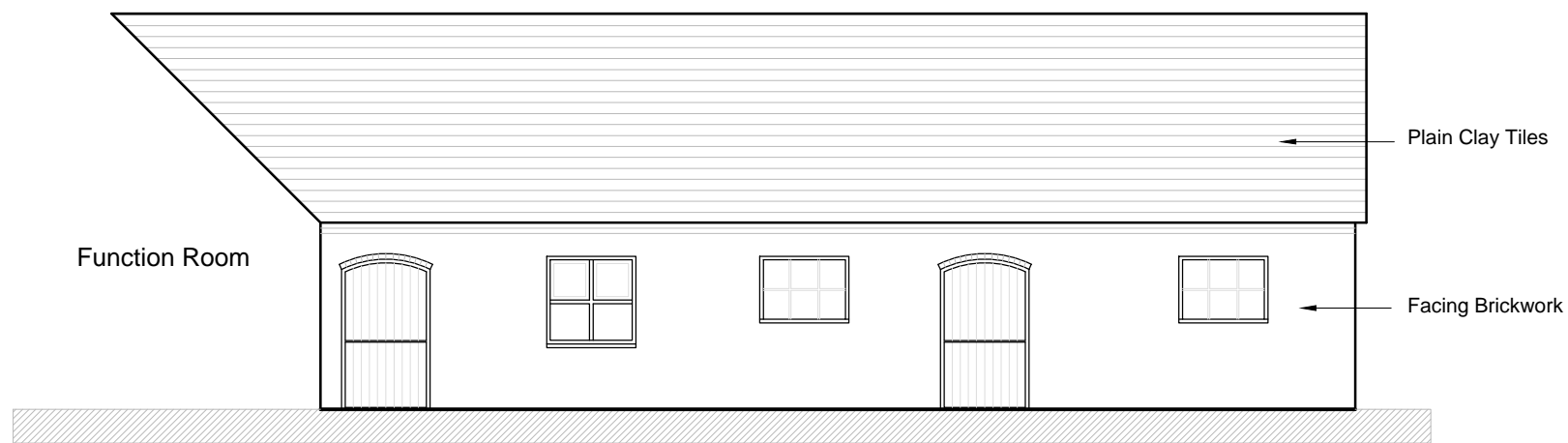
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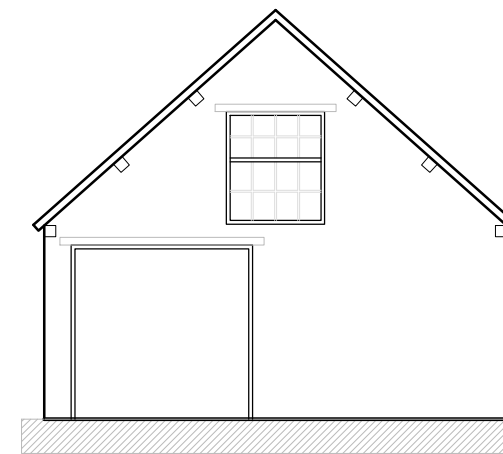
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The Barns

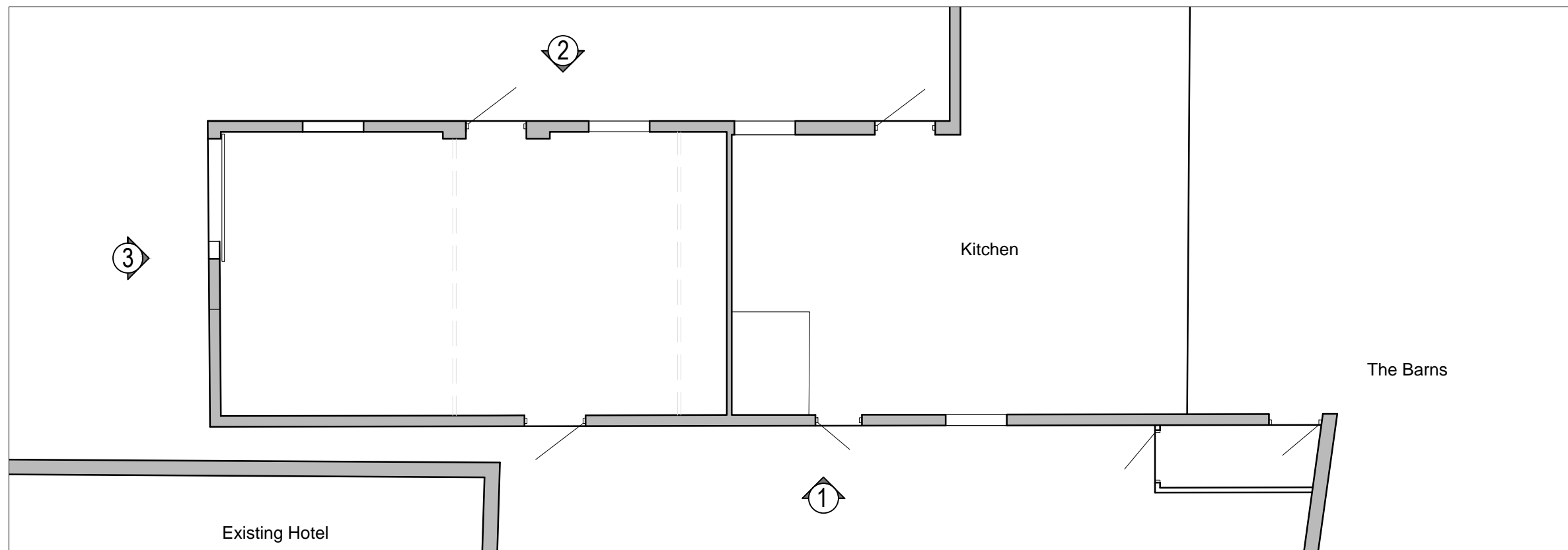


Existing Rear Elevation (2)

Function Room



Existing Side Elevation (3)



Existing Floor Plan - Barn 2

Kitchen

The Barns

PROJECT:
THE BARNs
COCKSPARROW LANE
HUNTINGTON
CANNOCK

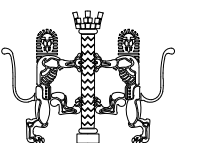
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TURN-ELL LIMITED

TITLE:
EXISTING PLANS AND ELEVATIONS
(BARN 2)

SUTTON AND WILKINSON
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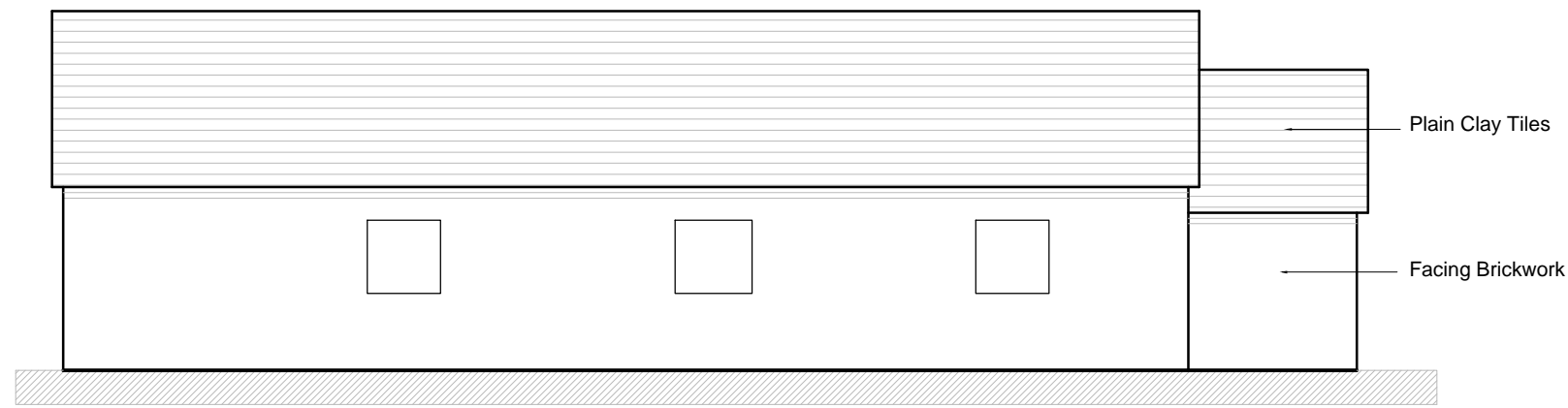


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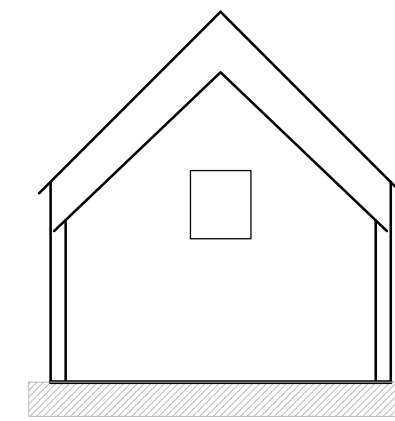
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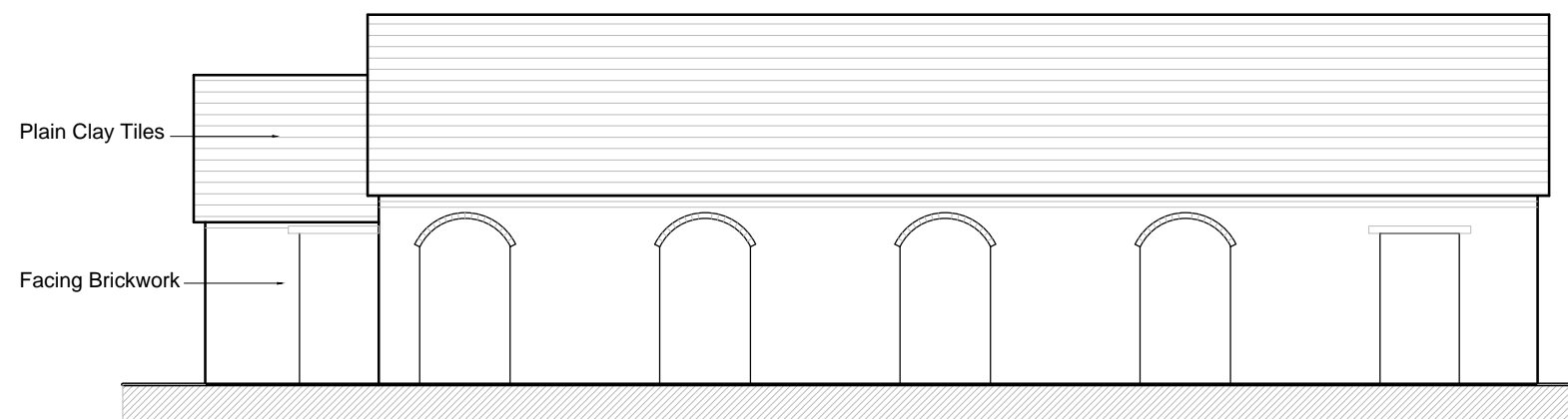
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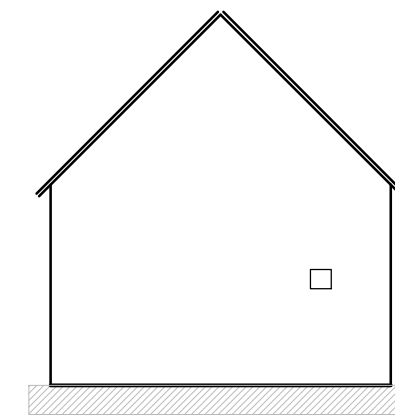
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Existing Side Elevation - (North Facing - 4)

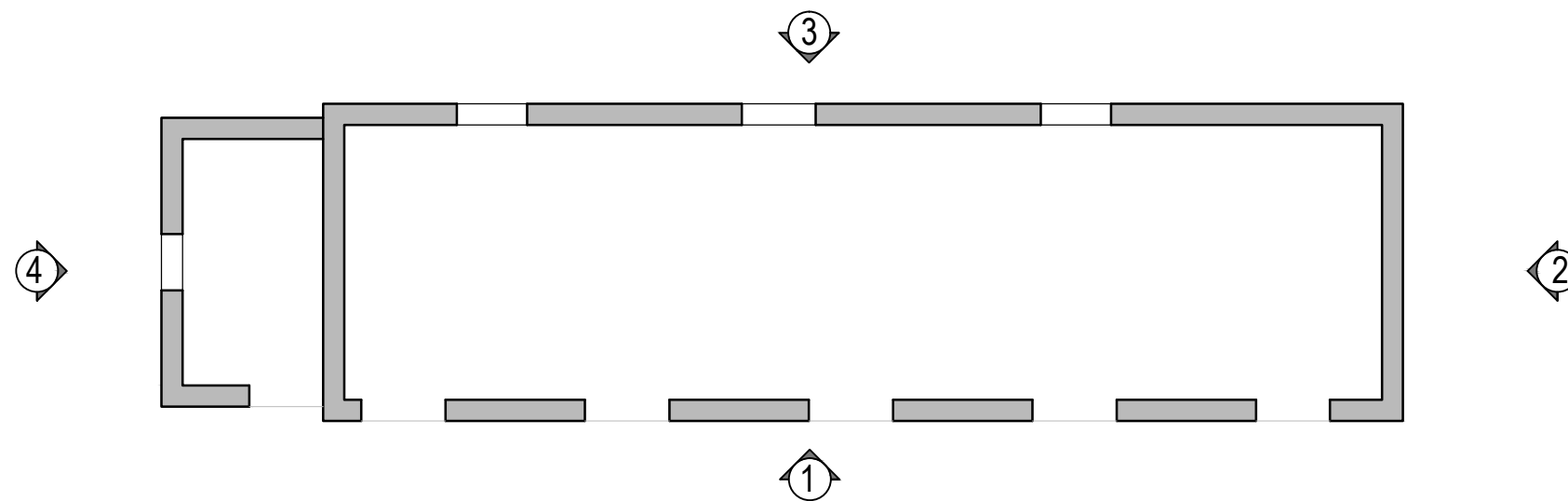


Existing Front Elevation - (East Facing - 1)



Existing Side Elevation - (South Facing - 2)

Drawing to be read in conjunction with 2525 - 05 Existing Barn Photos



Existing Floor Plan - Barn 3

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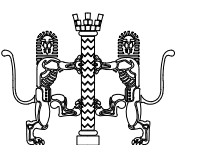
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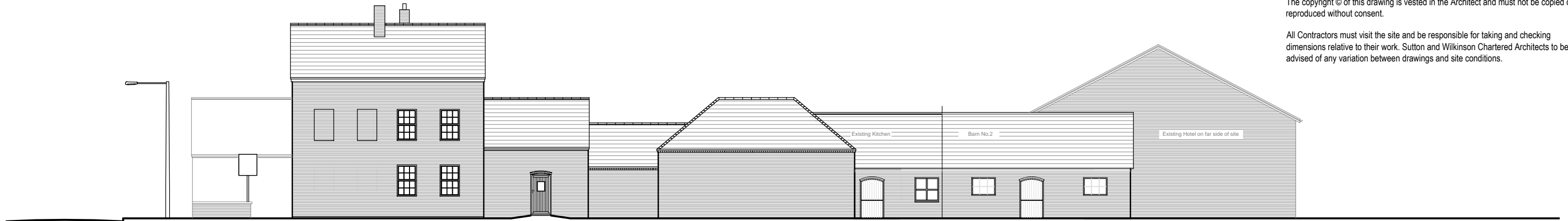


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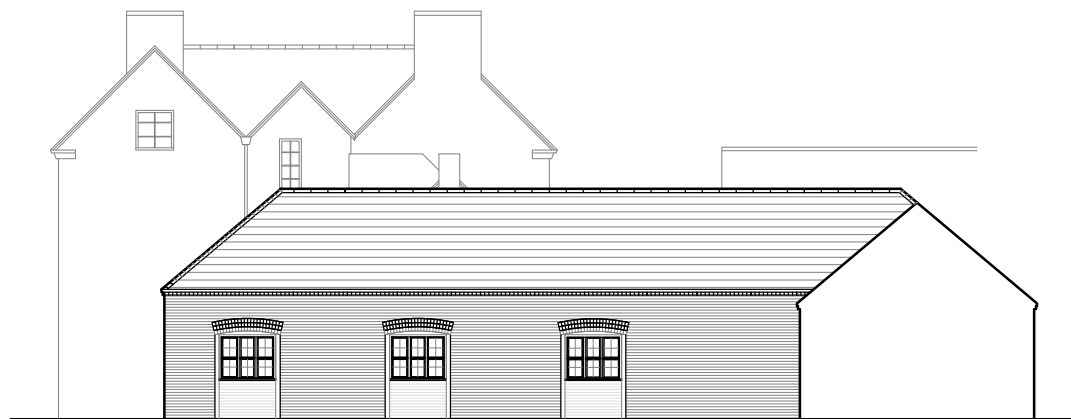
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Existing Side Elevation (1)



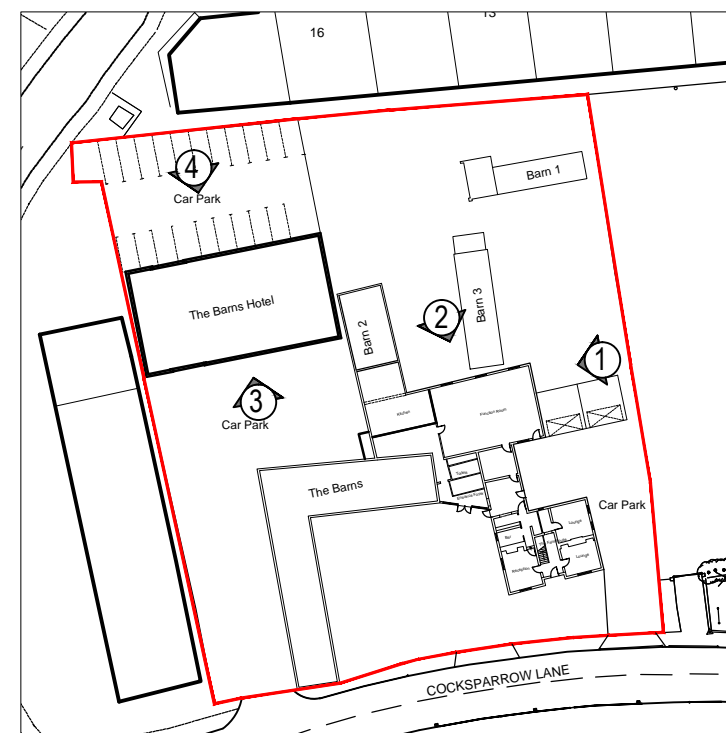
Existing Rear Function Room Elevation (2)



Existing Front Hotel Elevation (3)



Existing Rear Hotel Elevation (4)



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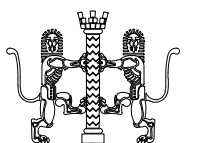
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EXISTING ELEVATIONS

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