LITTLE HICCOMBE BROMPTON REGIS SOMERSET

Results of a Desk Based Appraisal & Historic Building Assessment





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Little Hiccombe Brompton Regis Somerset

Results of a Desk-based Appraisal Historic Building Assessment

For

Jenny Matravers Of

Louise Crossman Architects (the agent)

On behalf of

Tom Howells (the client)

Ву



SWARCH project reference: BRH14 OS Map copying Licence No: 100044808 National Grid Reference: SS9549430219 Project Director: Colin Humphreys Fieldwork Manager: Dr. Samuel Walls Project Officer: Dr. Samuel Walls Desk Based Assessment: Victoria Hosegood; Dr. Samuel Walls Research: Jonathon Byrne Historic Building Survey: Emily Wapshott Report: Emily Wapshot; Victoria Hosegood Report Editing: Dr. Samuel Walls Graphics: Victoria Hosegood

October 2014

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Summary

The present building at Little Hiccombe dates to the late 1920s or early 1930s, although it is positioned on the site of an earlier building, which is shown on the 1840 tithe map, but had been demolished by 1888. The earlier building at Little Hiccombe and the various small garden/orchard plots (many of which are still traceable in the present boundaries) may represent a 'squatter' settlement on roadside waste/edge of common location. The present structure is of limited architectural interest or historic merit, as nothing of the historic structure appears to survive. There may be below ground traces of the earlier building, but these are likely to have been severely truncated by the present structure.

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Acknowledgements

Thanks for assistance are due to: Tom Howells, for unrestricted access to the site Jenny Matravers of Louise Crossman Architects (the Agent) Shirley Blaylock, Exmoor National Park Authority (ENPA) The staff of the Somerset Heritage Centre (SHC)

1.0 Introduction

Location: Little Hiccombe Parish: Brompton Regis County: Somerset

1.1 Project Background

South West Archaeology Ltd. (SWARCH) was commissioned by Jenny Matravers of Louise Crossman Architects (the Agent) on behalf of Tom Howells (the Client) to conduct a desk based appraisal and historic building assessment of a building at Little Hiccombe, Brompton Regis, Dulverton, Somerset (Figure 1). The work was undertaken in advance of the renovation, conversion and development of the building at Little Hiccombe. The work was undertaken in order to understand the date, form, function and development of the building from its origins, with the aim of understanding the impact of any proposed development on the historic fabric of the building.

1.2 Topographical and Geological Background

The building in question is located opposite Higher Venn Farm off the road which leads north from Hartford to Brompton Regis. It is situated in a small valley just to the north-east of Hiccombe Wood at approximately 230m AOD (see Figures 1-2).

The site straddles two underlying geology formations; the Pickwell Down Sandstone Formation lies under the northern part of the site while the Morte Slates formation lies to the south (BGS 2013). The soils which overlie these rock formations are the well drained fine loamy soils of the Denbigh 1 Association (SSEW 1983).

1.3 Methodology

The building survey was undertaken by Emily Wapshott in September 2014 in accordance with English Heritage and IfA guidelines on the recording of standing buildings and structures, and in accordance with a WSI (Appendix 1) drawn up in consultation with Shirley Blaylock of Exmoor National Park Authority (ENPA). The survey was based on an internal and external site inspection, using architect plans supplied by the Client.

The desk-based appraisal was compiled by Victoria Hosegood in accordance with IfA (2008) guidelines and the standards outlined within the WSI (Appendix 1).

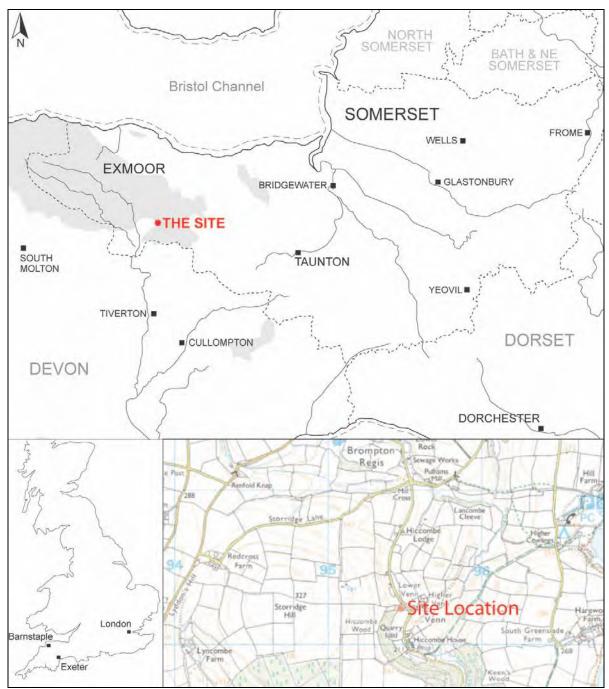


Figure 1: Location map, the site is indicated.

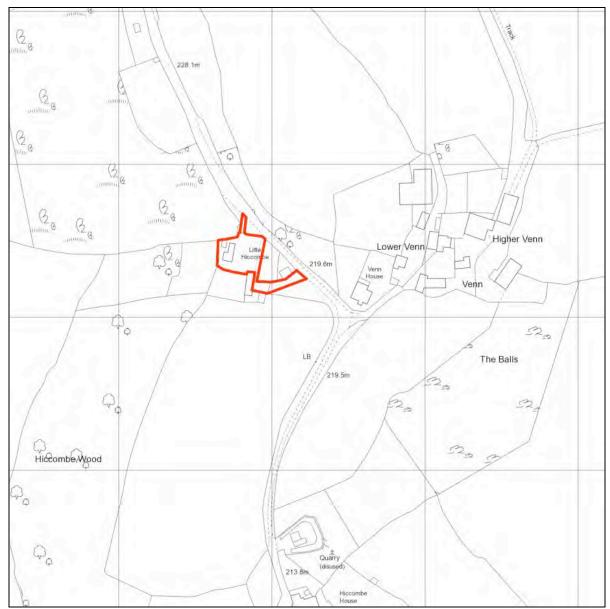


Figure 2: Detailed location plan (from Louise Crossman Architects).

2.0 Results of a Desk-based Appraisal

2.1 Historical Summary

The Domesday Book states that the king's manor of Brompton Regis (then called Bruneston) was held by Gytha, wife of Earl Godwyn and mother of Harold Godwinson. The pattern of settlement surrounding the village also has medieval origins. Mick Aston (1983) took a look at the historic settlement pattern in this region based on the 1327 lay subsidy of West Somerset and noted that many of the medieval farmsteads and hamlets described have survived through to today.

The only written source pertaining directly to the building here assessed is a 1927 sale catalogue for Freehold Accommodation Land at Little Hiccombe Farm (SHC DD/TBL/90/13). The catalogue, although naming the farm, the various land-uses and its size, makes no reference to any buildings being present on the site (or at least none were being sold). The sale catalogue notes that at the time of the sale the 'Farm' was partly in the occupation of Mr. Criddle and Mr. T. Pearse.

2.2 Cartographic Sources

2.2.1 Early cartographic sources

The first source available to this study which shows sufficient detail is the first series Ordnance Survey (OS) Map of 1809 (Figure 3). This map is more useful for studying bigger changes in the landscape rather than individual buildings, but it does however show settlements at Hickham Green and Ven(n). There appears to be a small building, perhaps set in an area of roadside waste in the approximate location of Little Hiccombe, to the west of the road junction at Ven(n). The map however, is not clear or detailed enough for a definitive conclusion to be draw as to whether the building at Little Hiccombe was present in 1809.



Figure 3: Extract from the first series OS map of 1809. The approximate location of the site is indicated.

2.2.2 Bromton Regis Tithe Map of 1841

The tithe map of Brompton Regis (Figure 4) dating to 1841 shows a group of buildings at Venn and the presence of a building and various small fields in the approximate location of the present house at Little Hiccombe. The building and small plots are numbered 1003, which in the accompanying apportionment are described as house, orchard and garden. The field numbered 1002a is also described as garden and waste, and 1004 as a further orchard. The apportionment shows that these plots were leased by a John Wensley from William Lilson.

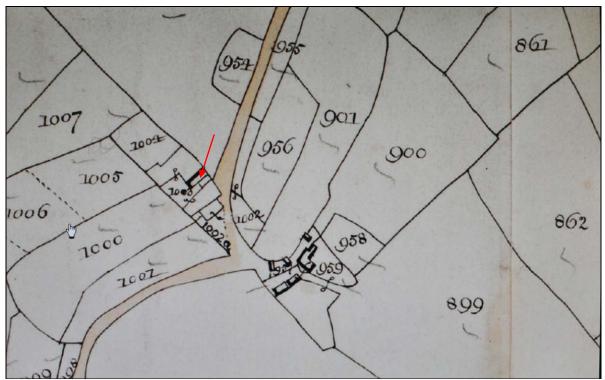


Figure 4: Extract from the 1841 Brompton Regis Tithe Map (source: SHC).

2.2.3 First Edition Ordnance Survey Map of 1888

On the First Edition OS Map (Figure 5) a similar group of buildings are shown at Venn. No building is shown at Little Hiccombe, although the small garden and orchard enclosures that had surrounded the building on the tithe map are still present. The building itself has either been left off of the map, or more likely, been demolished.



Figure 5: Extract from the first edition OS Map of 1888. The location of Little Hiccombe is arrowed.

2.2.4 Second Edition Ordnance Survey Map of 1904

There are no major changes apparent between the first and second edition OS Maps. The second edition still shows an empty plot at Little Hiccombe. From this we can infer that the building at Little Hiccombe was built perhaps as a 'squatter' settlement, most likely in the early 19th century, in an area of roadside waste. This building was demolished between 1840 and 1888 and later rebuilt after 1904.

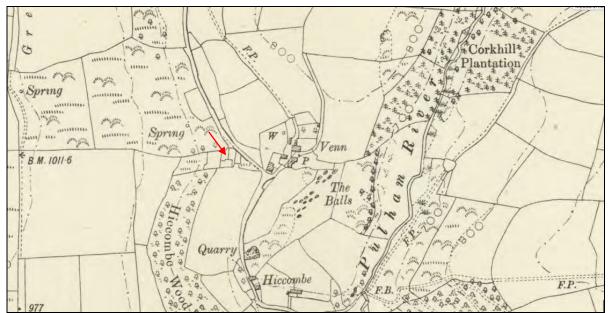


Figure 6: Extract from the second edition OS Map of 1904. The location of Little Hiccombe is arrowed.

2.2.5 Later Cartographic Sources

Little Hiccombe is certainly shown on the 1946 and later OS maps. Thus the inference from this map is that a building at Little Hiccombe is rebuilt sometime between 1904 and 1948 and the building that we see on the earlier maps, despite being in the same approximate location and of similar size, is not the same as the one which is extant today. It appears likely given the 1927 sale catalogue that the present house at Little HIccombe was built around this time (SHC DD/TBL/90/13).

3.0 Historic Building Assessment

3.1 Summary

The site consists of an early to mid-20th century timber clad bungalow, set within an overgrown terraced garden plot on an east-south-east facing slope, in a wooded valley, within the hamlet of Venn; accessed via a short section of concrete driveway from the parish road.

The building stands on a terrace with stone rubble construction revetment walls to the north, built against the slope of the hillside. To the north-east, the revetment wall has a sub-square alcove, with a stone slab lintel; this is overgrown but open to the base. This may be associated with a well or land drain, with a section of guttering cemented into its back wall. A small modern timber 'garden shed' stands on a terrace to the north of the bungalow. In the adjacent field, to the south-west, is a stone rubble barn with a walled yard to the front.

The earliest standing building fabric is found within Building 1 (B1), the single storey bungalow. It is a pre-fabricated building of the 1920s/30s. The building is adjoined to its northern elevation by Building 1a, a later 20th century extension. B1 lies on a north-east south-west alignment, on a stonebuilt, concrete covered terrace, with 'crazy-paving' to the west. The construction of B1 is of a timber frame/structure, on a brick base, with timber cladding, to the exterior. The timber cladding has been coated in a thick black bitumen-style substance to weatherproof the structure. The brick base is covered with concrete render. The roof is of concrete/fibre tiles, largely obscured by moss, with red terracotta ridge tiles, red painted barge boards and boxed in eaves. B1 is rectangular in plan, with a small projecting porch, B1 contains four main rooms and a small larder. B1 is of one single phase of construction, with some minor updating and repairs.

Building 1a (B1a) adjoins B1, on its north-west corner and is a later 20th century extension, possibly dating to around the 1960s. The building is built of solid rendered construction, under a single pitch boarded roof, with barge boards. It contains the utility room, a small lobby and the bathroom, which serves B1.

3.2 Significance

The site is of *local* significance, specifically for its early history, a building being documented on the mapping in the early 19th century, at the time of enclosure, when much of the surrounding common land was enclosed. It also holds *local* significance in the development of the hamlet of Venn during the 19th and 20th centuries. The building itself holds a certain level of historical significance, as a good example of an early 20th century pre-fabricated structure. The developments in technology and design which lead to the construction of these pre-fabricated homes revolutionised housing for many people in the pre and post war years of the 1920s-1960s. This small building has received very little later 20th century or 21st century alteration. The building is not DoE listed however and does not represent any local vernacular architectural merit.

3.3 Historic Phasing of the Buildings

c.1800-1900

The stone rubble construction revetment walls to the terracing on which B1 stands, may represent an earlier 19th century agricultural function of the site at Little Hiccombe. Further work would be needed to confirm this.

c.1927-1940

The timber clad bungalow was built after the 1904 mapping, but before the 1946 map. It was most likely constructed in the late 1920s or early 1930s following the sale of the 'farm'.

c.1950s-1960s

The bungalow was wired for electric lights during one sub-phase of alteration. The brown bakelite 'MK' sockets/switches within B1 being classically of this mid-20th century period, slightly later than the construction.

The extension (B1a) was built to the rear of B1, providing a 'modern' bathroom and additional kitchen/utility room space.

4.0 Conclusions

4.1 Conclusion

The present building at Little Hiccombe dates to the late 1920s or early 1930s, although it is positioned on the site of an earlier building, which is shown on the 1840 tithe map, but had been demolished by 1888. The earlier building at Little Hiccombe and the various small garden/orchard plots (many of which are still traceable in the present boundaries) may represent a 'squatter' settlement on roadside waste/edge of common location.

The present structure is of limited architectural interest or historic merit, as nothing of the historic structure appears to survive. There may be below ground traces of the earlier building, but these are likely to have been severely truncated by the present structure.

5.0 Bibliography & References

Published Sources:

Aston, M. 1983: 'Deserted farmsteads on Exmoor and the Lay Subsidy of 1327 in West Somerset', *Somerset Archaeological and Natural History 127,* 71-104.

Institute of Field Archaeologists 1994 (Revised 2001 & 2008): *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Desk-based Assessment.*

Institute of Field Archaeologists 1996 (Revised 2001 & 2008): *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings or Structures.*

Institute of Field Archaeologists 2001 (Revised 2008): *Standard and Guidance for the Collection, Documentation, Conservation and Research of Archaeological Materials.*

Unpublished Sources: Somerset Heritage Centre Brompton Regis Tithe Map and Apportionment SHC DD/TBL/90/13, 1927 Sale Catalogue

Appendix 1

WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION FOR DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT AND HISTORIC BUILDING RECORDING AT LITTLE HICCOMBE, BROMPTON REGIS, SOMERSET.

Location:Little Hiccombe TA22 9NSParish:Brompton RegisCounty:SomersetNGR:SS 9549430219Planning Appl:Conversion and development of a building at Little HiccombeProposal:O2/09/2014

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document forms a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) which has been produced by South West Archaeology Ltd (SWARCH) at the request of Jenny Matravers of Louise Crossman Architects (The Agent) on behalf of Tom Howells (the Client). It sets out the methodology for desk-based assessment and historic building recording to be undertaken ahead of the renovation and development of a building at Little Hiccombe, Brompton Regis Somerset and for related off-site analysis and reporting. The WSI and the schedule of work it proposes were drawn up in consultation with Shirley Blaylock of Exmoor National Park Authority (ENPA). This WSI covers only the desk-based assessment and building recording aspects of the work, any further mitigation work will be covered by a separate document.
- 1.2 The work is being commissioned in line with government planning policy (PPG No. *16 Archaeology and Planning* (DoE, 1990)) and the archaeological condition (number 5) attached to the planning consent, which states that;

'No development work shall take place until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out at all times in strict accordance with the approved scheme, or such other details as may be subsequently agreed in writing by the Planning Authority.'

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORIC BACKGROUND

2.1 The site looks to be of 20th century date and is not listed. There has been no previous archaeological work undertaken within the immediate vicinity and the only feature within close proximity to the site noted on the Exmoor National Park Historic Environment record, is a post medieval field bank (MMO668). In the wider landscape there are however, a number of features. The HER notes an earthwork enclosure approximately 500m to the south east of the site (MSO12279) and less than one kilometre to the west there is a Prehistoric flint scatter (MSO11949) and a possible Prehistoric standing stone (MSO11086).

3.0 AIMS

- 3.1 Undertake a desk-based assessment of the site;
- 3.2 To make a record of the historic buildings prior to the commencement of the restoration and construction works;
- 3.3 To analyse and report on the results of the project as appropriate.

4.0 PROGRAMME OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORKS

4.1 Desk-based appraisal:

The programme of work shall include a desk-based *appraisal* of the site to place the development area into its historic and archaeological context. This will include examination of cartographic sources; *Ordnance Survey* maps and the Tithe Map(s) and Apportionments.

This information will be presented as part of the final report along with the results of the fieldwork.

4.2 Historic building recording:

A record shall be made of the historic fabric of the buildings affected by the development. This work shall conform to an appropriate level (Level 1) of recording as set in Understanding Historic Buildings: A guide to good recording practice - English Heritage 2006 (available on-line at <u>https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/understanding-historic-buildings/</u>).

Previously prepared architect's plans will be used as the basis of any historic building fabric recording, provided they are of adequate scale and accuracy.

4.3 A photographic record of the historic buildings recording work will be prepared. This will include photographs illustrating the principal architectural features and any finds discovered, in detail and in context. The

photographic record will also include working shots to illustrate more generally the nature of the archaeological operation mounted. All photographs of archaeological detail will feature an appropriately-sized scale. The drawn and written record will be on an appropriately archivable medium.

- 4.4 Health and Safety requirements will be observed at all times by any archaeological staff working on site, particularly when working with machinery. As a minimum: high-visibility jackets, safety helmets and protective footwear will be worn.
- 4.4.1 Appropriate PPE will be employed at all times.
- 4.4.2 The site archaeologist will undertake any site safety induction course provided by the Client.

5.0 REPORTING

- 5.1 A report will be produced, including the following elements:
- 5.1.1 A report number, date and the OASIS record number;
- 5.1.2 A copy of this WSI;
- 5.1.3 A summary of the project's background;
- 5.1.4 A description and illustration of the buildings location;
- 5.1.5 A methodology of the works undertaken;
- 5.1.6 Plans and reports of all documentary and other research undertaken;
- 5.1.7 A summary of the project's results;
- 5.1.8 An interpretation of the results in the appropriate context;
- 5.1.9 A summary of the contents of the project archive and its location (including summary catalogues of finds and samples);
- 5.1.10 A site location plan at an appropriate scale on an Ordnance Survey, or equivalent, base-map;
- 5.1.11 A plan showing the layout of the building subject to this programme of work in relation to identifiable landscape features and other buildings;
- 5.1.12 The results of the historic building recording that shall include a written description and analysis of the historic fabric of the building, appropriately;
- 5.1.13 Photographs showing the general site layout and exposed significant features of historic or architectural significance that are referred to in the text. All photographs will contain appropriate scales, the size of which will be noted in the illustration's caption;
- 5.1.14 A consideration of evidence within its wider context;
- 5.1.15 Any specialist assessment or analysis reports that where undertaken;
- 5.2 ENPA will receive the report within three months of completion of fieldwork, dependant on the provision of specialist reports, radiocarbon dating results etc, the production of which may exceed this period. If a substantial delay is anticipated then an interim report will be produced and a revised submission date for the final report agreed with the ENPA.
- 5.3 On completion of the final report, in addition to copies required by the Client, hard copies of the report shall be supplied to the ENPA on the understanding that one of these copies will be deposited for public reference in the ENPA. In addition to the hard copies of the report, one copy shall be provided to the ENPA in digital format in a format to be agreed in advance with the ENPA on the understanding that it may in future be made available to researchers via a web-based version of the Historic Environment Record.
- 5.4 A copy of the report detailing the results of these investigations will be submitted to the OASIS (*Online AccesS* to the Index of archaeological investigations) database under reference southwes1-188999 within 6 months of completion of fieldwork.

6.0 PUBLICATION

Where the exposure of architectural or historic building fabric is limited or of little significance reporting will follow on directly from the field work - see section 5 above. Should particularly significant architectural, archaeological or palaeoenvironmental remains, finds and/or deposits be encountered, then these, because of their importance, are likely to merit wider publication in line with government planning guidance (paragraph 141 of the *National Planning Policy Framework* (2012). If such remains are encountered, the publication requirements – including any further analysis that may be necessary – will be confirmed with the ENPA.

7.0 MONITORING

- 7.1.1 SWARCH shall agree monitoring arrangements with the ENPA and give two weeks notice, unless a shorter period is agreed, of commencement of the fieldwork. Details will be agreed of any monitoring points where decisions on options within the programme are to be made.
- 7.1.2 Monitoring will continue until the deposition of the site archive and finds, and the satisfactory completion of an OASIS report see 8.0 below.
- 7.1.3 SWARCH will notify the ENPA upon completion of the fieldwork stage of these works.

8.0 ARCHIVE

- 8.1 On completion of the project an ordered and integrated site archive will be prepared in accordance with guidance prepared by ENPA and Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE) (http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/morphe-project-managers-guide/). The digital element of the archive will be transferred to the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) for long-term curation.
- 8.2 The archive will consist of two elements, the digital archive and the material archive.
- 8.2.1 The digital archive, including digital copies of all relevant written and drawn records and photographs, will be deposited with the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) and in compliance with their standards and requirements.
- 8.2.2 The material archive, comprising the retained artefacts/samples and the hardcopy paper record (if requested) will be cleaned (or otherwise treated), ordered, recorded, packed and boxed in accordance with the deposition standards of the Museum of Somerset (MOS), and in a timely fashion.
- 8.2.3 If the MOS wishes to retain the hardcopy paper archive, it will be deposited with the rest of the material archive under an accession number. Should the MOS decline the hardcopy paper archive, that archive will be offered to other appropriate museum bodies or record offices. If a suitable third party cannot be found, the hardcopy paper archive will be retained by SWARCH for 3 years and then destroyed.
- 8.3 SWARCH will, on behalf of the MOS, obtain a written agreement from the landowner to transfer title to all items in the material archive to the receiving museum.
- 8.4 If ownership of all or any of the finds is to remain with the landowner, provision and agreement must be made for the time-limited retention of the material and its full analysis and recording, by appropriate specialists.
- 8.5 SWARCH will notify the ENPA upon the completion of:i) deposition of the digital archive with the ADS, and

ii) deposition of the material (finds) archive with the museum.

- 8.6 The condition placed upon this development will not be regarded as discharged until the report has been produced and submitted to the MOS and the LPA, the site archive deposited and the OASIS form completed.
- 8.7 The archive will be completed within 6 months of the completion of the final report.

9.0 CONFLICT WITH OTHER CONDITIONS AND STATUTORY PROTECTED SPECIES

9.1 Even where work is being undertaken under the direct control and supervision of SWARCH personnel, it remains the responsibility of the Client - in consultation with SWARCH, the applicant or agent – to ensure that the required archaeological works do not conflict with any other conditions that have been imposed upon the consent granted and should also consider any biodiversity issues as covered by the NERC Act 2006. In particular, such conflicts may arise where archaeological investigations/excavations have the potential to have an impact upon protected species and/or natural habitats e.g. SSSIs, National Nature Reserves, Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation, Ramsar sites, County Wildlife Sites etc.

10.0 PERSONNEL & MONITORING

10.1 The project will be managed by Colin Humphreys; the building recording will be undertaken by SWARCH personnel with appropriate expertise and experience. Where necessary, appropriate specialist advice will be sought (see list of consultant specialists in Appendix 1 below).

Victoria Hosegood

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Appendix 2 Historic Building Assessment: Supporting photos



Alcove or opening, with stone slab lintel in the revetment wall to the north-north-east of the bungalow; from the west.



View along the rear elevation of the bungalow; from the north.



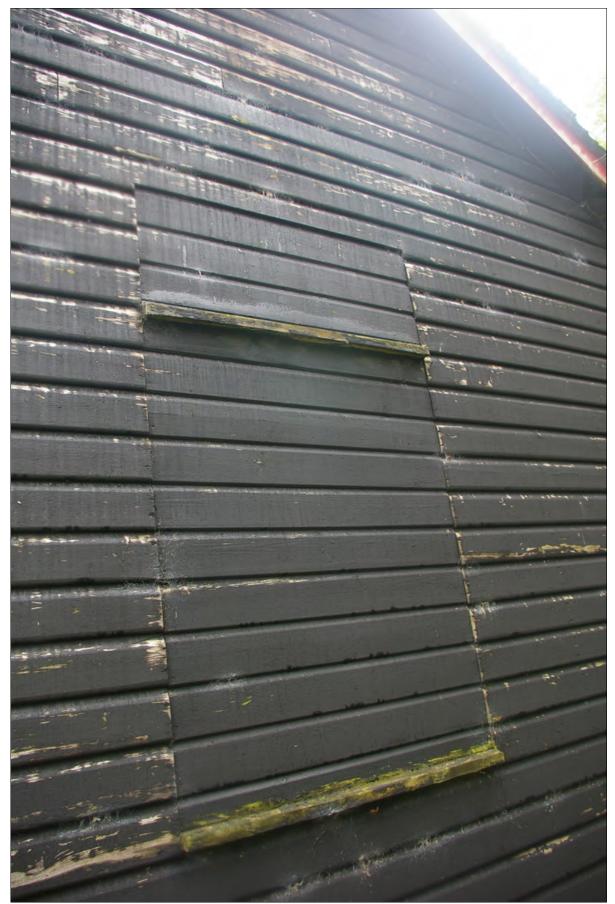
View along the north-east elevation of the bungalow; from the west, north-west.



View along the rear elevation of the bungalow, with 2m scale; from the south-west.



View along the rear face of the roof at Little Hiccombe; from the north.



Detail of the blocked window opening in the north-east elevation; from the east.



View along the front elevation of Little Hiccombe, showing the timber windows; from the east-north-east.



The timber projecting porch; from the east-north-east.



View along the front elevation of Little Hiccombe, with 2m scale; from the east, north-east.



View of the porch, with 2m scale; from the south.



View along the front elevation of Little Hiccombe, with 2m scale; from the south-south-west.



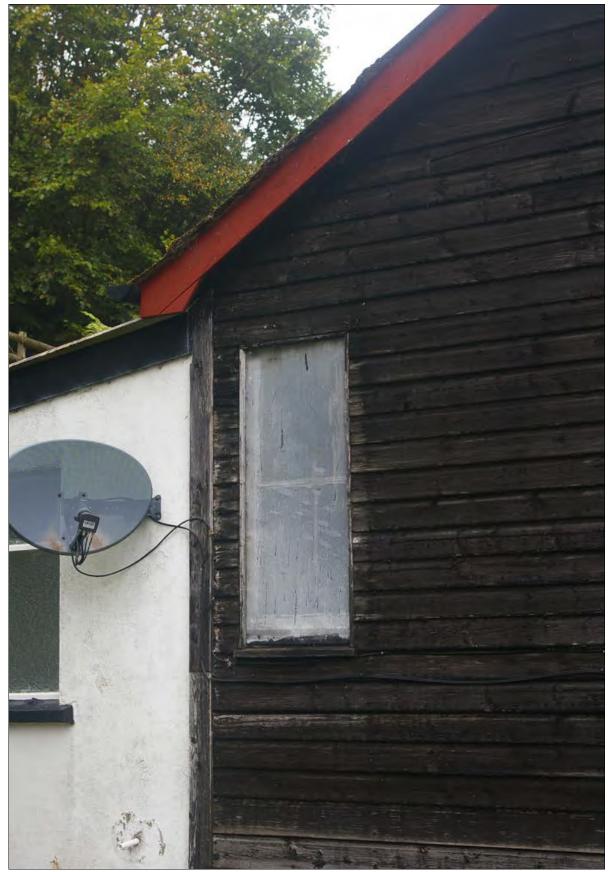
View of the south-west elevation of Little Hiccombe, with 2m scale; from the south-south-west.



Detail of one of the timber windows at Little Hiccombe; from the south-south-west.



Detail of the blocked window opening in the south-west elevation; from the south-south-west.



View of the narrow larder window cut into the south-west elevation, covered with metal mesh; from the south-south-west.



The paved terrace to the south-west of the bungalow and the stone revetment walling to the bank behind the bungalow; from the south.



View of the random paved terrace to the south-west of the bungalow; from the west-north-west.



The barns below Little Hiccombe, within the adjacent field; from the north-north-west.



The raised gable over the front porch at Little Hiccombe; from the south-south-west.



The front door with glazed panel; from the south-west.



The chimney stack and fireplace in the central reception room; from the north-north-west.



The front door and flanking narrow windows in the central reception room; from the north.



The doorway between the living room and the kitchen; from the north-north-east.



Detail of the narrow window, south of the front door, showing a two pane casement and upper hopper single pane casement, with scroll detail latches; from the north, north-east.



As above, detail of the window to the north of the front door.



Detail of the large double light window in the rear wall of the south room; from the south-east.

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Bedroom one in the bungalow, to the north end of the building; from the west, north-west.



The window in the south wall of bedroom one; from the north.



Detail of the window in bedroom one; from the north-north-west.



The fireplace and range in the kitchen; from the south.



The rear wall in the kitchen, with door to the utility room extension and to the larder; from the south-east.



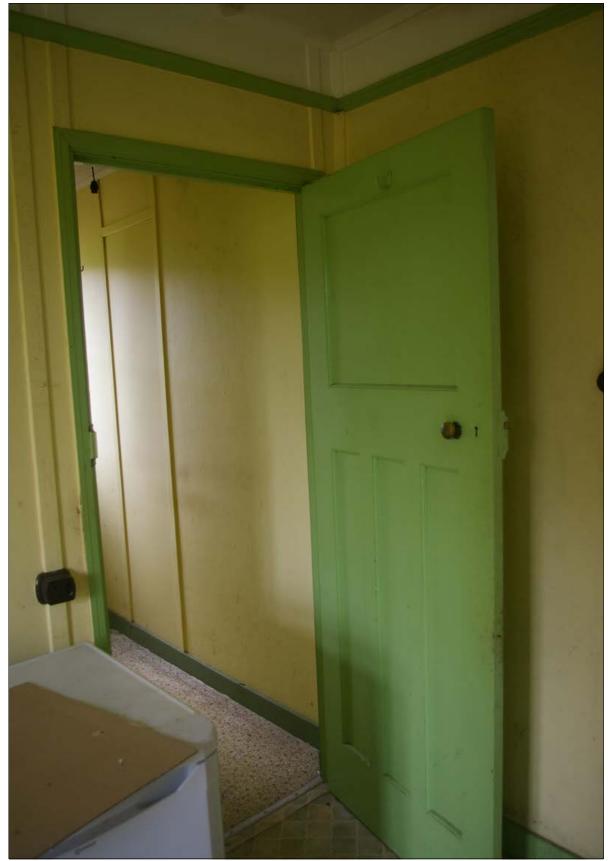
The cupboards in the kitchen; from the south.



The front and west wall of the kitchen, with the door to bedroom two; from the north.



Detail of the window in the front wall of the bungalow, within the kitchen; from the west-north-west.



Detail of the door to the larder; from the east.



The interior of the larder, with timber shelves on metal brackets; from the north-north-east.



Detail of the window in the larder; from the north-north-east.



Detail of the shelves and brackets in the larder; from the north-east.



The rear door into the extension, serving the utility room; from the south.



The modern timber kitchen units in the extension; from the south.



The utility room, with mid 20th century metal framed window; from the south-east.



Detail of the window in the utility room; from the east.



The plain mid 20th century doors in the extension and small lobby between the utility room and bathroom; from the north-north-west.



The bathroom, within the extension, with metal framed window; from the south-east.

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Detail of the timber fireplace surround within the central reception room; from the north.



View to the rear extension, behind the bungalow; from the north-east.



The stone built revetment bank to the east and north of the bungalow; from the south.



View to the bungalow from the access path and the terrace in front of the building; from the north-east.



The gates and concrete driveway up to the bungalow; from the north-north-west.



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