

THE MALT SCOOP MERTON DEVON

Statement of Significance



The Old Dairy
Hacche Lane Business Park
Pathfields Business Park
South Molton
Devon
EX36 3LH

Tel: 01769 573555
Email: mail@swarch.net

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Authors: E. Wapshott

1.1 Introduction

The Malt Scoop Inn is a Grade II Listed semi-detached thatched building within the village of Merton, north-east of the village square and church. The village of Merton lies on an undulating south-south-west facing slope, above the River Mere Valley. South West Archaeology (SWARCH) was commissioned by Louise Rollason (the client) to assess the significance of an internal wall, which subdivides two of the rooms within the public house.

The building stands in a wide plot, set back from the A386 road, with a courtyard to the front, the L-shaped main building forming the west boundary of the site, attached to Wring House. There is a stone barn forming the east boundary, adjoining Maltscoop Cottages. To the north, fenced gardens and a further stone barn form the boundary.

1.2 Historic Context

Merton village was included in the Domesday Book of 1086, as Mertona. Other spellings of the name are recorded as Martyn and Marton, or Mereton. The 15th century Grade II* Listed Parish Church was heavily restored in the 19th century and renamed All Saints but was previously dedicated to St Martin. There are approximately 16 other Listed Buildings or groups of buildings within the village.

South-east of Merton across the River Mere valley is the large estate of Heanton Satchville, now run by Clinton Devon Estates. A Manor within the parish of Petrockstowe, named 'Hantone' in the Domesday Book, the estate was associated with a number of notable Westcountry families; Yeo, Satchville, Rolle, Walpole and Trefusis. The neighbouring mansion of Huish was purchased by the Clinton family in 1812, the house at Heanton having burned down in 1795; the whole renamed as Heanton Satchville.

The village of Merton was transformed in the 19th century by the Clinton family at 'Heanton Satchville', formalising the village square, building the school room and funding the restoration of the church, converting earlier single dwellings into rows of cottages for estate workers. It was around this time c.1800 that the Malt Scoop, known locally as the '*Scoop*', was converted from a farmhouse to a Coaching Inn, serving the route between the towns of Hatherleigh and Great Torrington. Local history tells of the Estate workers who made up much of the community being paid in tokens instead of money, in an effort to dissuade them from drinking alcohol in the Malt Scoop, spending their wages solely on food and other provisions.



Figure 1: Extract from the Merton Tithe Map c.1842, the Malt Scoop Inn (number 981) is indicated.

The Merton tithe map appears to show the building by then known as the Malt Scoop as a u-shaped building, which indicates that the extension to the west was already in place at this stage, along with an extension to the east (where the modern toilet block now stands). The pink shading indicates that the building was residential, described in the accompanying apportionment as *house and outhouses*. The wall between the main house and the western extension had likely already been forced between the two, with the stack visible in the extension suggesting it may have originally been built as a separate cottage in the later 18th century.

1.3 Construction

The wall in question was viewed beneath the raised floor and appears to be of solid, stone construction. The wall is plastered and painted and has been heavily altered, a door and a window forced through. The door is likely to have been forced in order to join two formerly separate buildings in the 19th century at the time the building first became a public house. The window opening in contrast probably dates prior to the late 18th century construction of the western wing of the Inn, when the wall was still an external wall.

The window has plain panelled wooden shutters which are currently fixed shut; the opening set with modern shelves. The sash box is visible on the north side of the wall, the former internal face. A modern moulded door architrave frames the forced doorway linking the main bar space with the late 18th century extension which abuts the wall. Late 19th century style boarded panelling with raised dado rail is attached to the north (internal) face of the wall, within the main bar. A modern raised timber floor abuts the wall on the south side, to the north is a fine slate slab floor reset in cement. The slate (internal) floor is set slightly lower

than the timber floor within the extension.

1.4 Plan/layout and form of buildings

The building is of L-shaped form, the main range of c.1700 date, being on a rough east-west alignment, a substantial two storey extension abutting it at the west end of the south wall, of later 18th century date. There are several 19th century extensions to the north side of the building and a late 19th or early 20th century addition to the south-east corner, enclosing a toilet block.

Within the main range there is the remnant of a rough three-room plan, on the ground floor. The first floor was not viewed. The layout may be a later version of the traditional three cell cross-passage style farmhouse so commonly seen in this region. Upon entering the off-set main entrance door there is a central brick and stone stack with winder stair to the first floor, with large room to the right and small bar to the left, leading through to another small room beyond, now much altered and extended. This former c.1700 farmhouse was converted to a public house and coaching inn in c.1800 and the layout has therefore suffered much from this change in use.

1.5 Architectural Appraisal

The wall is not associated with any architectural features of the construction phase of the building (c.1700). Although the building as a whole is Grade II Listed, very few, if any, early internal fittings or architectural features survive from its constructional phase, although earlier more 'rustic' 16th/17th century features may be covered by later additions. All features on the ground floor appear to be of 18th or 19th century date. The value of the building from an architectural aspect is the age/survival of its main structure.

1.6 Summary of Significance

The building is of architectural value and historic interest, as a farmhouse, built in vernacular style, c.1700 or earlier. It is Grade II Listed, statutorily protected. The building is therefore considered to be of local importance, to be nationally important and of special interest. It has however, received extensive structural alteration in the 18th and 19th centuries. The building also holds significant ongoing community value as a local amenity, having been the village's public house for over 200 years.

The wider opening proposed within the wall will not detract from the significance of the building. The wall in itself is not especially significant to any extent on its own, but does form part of the original c.1700 or earlier structure. The wall is part of the original front exterior wall of the c.1700 farmhouse. It has however received 18th and 19th century alteration.

1.7 Impact of Proposed Works

The majority of the south wall of the main range will survive as an external wall. That which stands in the main bar has already lost its intended setting and function, now being enclosed. The wall has had a door and window already forced into it.

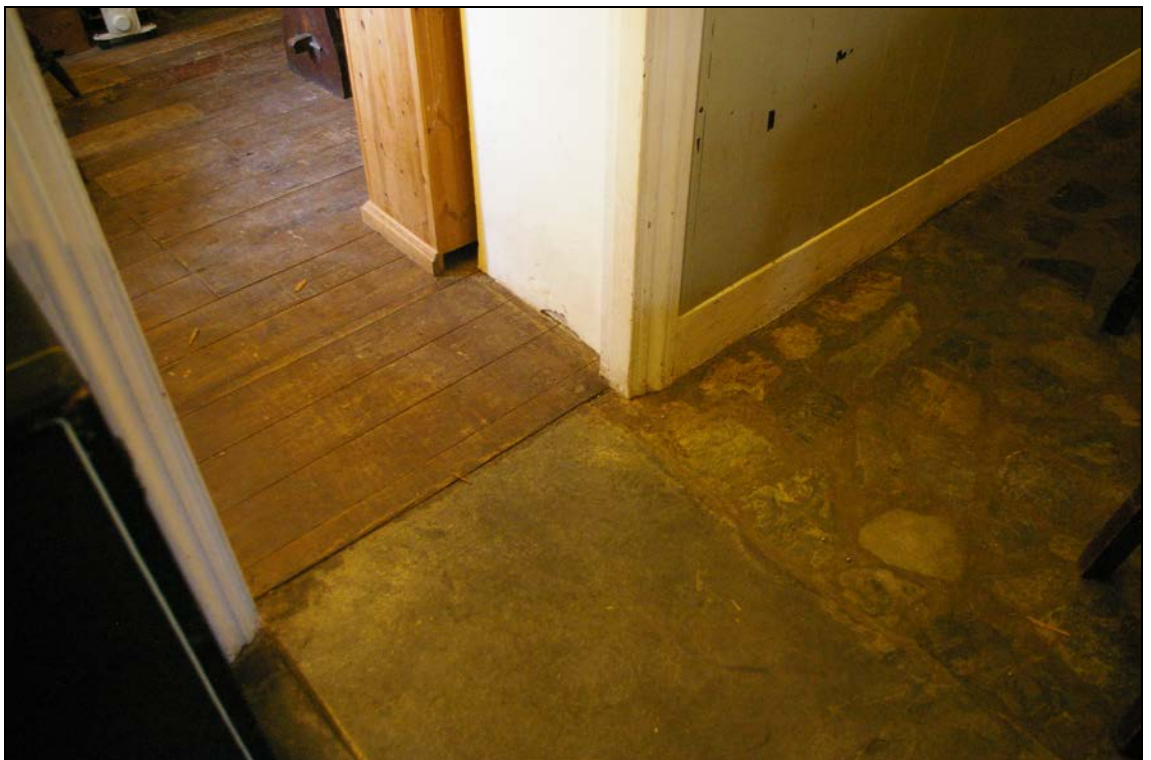
The 18th century extension (part of a former cottage) which abuts the c.1700 range at this point, enclosing this section of wall is obviously of secondary date and the original layout of a straight main range can and would still easily be determined from the rest of the surviving structure. The different dates of the two rooms would still be clearly evidenced in the differing floor and ceiling levels, and as the majority of the wall will still be retained. Any widening of an opening within the wall will not remove the clear visual clues of the differing dates and histories of the two rooms.

The building has been so heavily altered internally that sensitivity to change is much reduced, with little of the early internal layout surviving. Works on this wall are very specific and limited and will have no impact on the wider building and the architectural value, containing no significant features within the area to be affected.

Appendix 1
Supporting Jpegs



The former front exterior elevation including door and window openings, viewed from within the secondary bar area to the south.



The raised timber floor within the secondary bar area, which abuts the opening proposed for widening, and is set higher than the floor in the main bar; viewed from the south-west.