

**THE OLD FORGE  
MONKOKEHAMPTON  
WEST DEVON  
DEVON**

Historic Building Recording



South West Archaeology Ltd. report no. 210113



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# The Old Forge, Monkokehampton, Devon

## Results of historic building recording

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By E. Wapshott  
Report Version: Final

Draft issued: 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2020  
Finalised: 13<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Work undertaken by SWARCH on behalf of a Private Client

### SUMMARY

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*This report presents the results of historic building recording carried out by South West Archaeology Ltd. (SWARCH) for the Old Forge at Monkokehampton, in advance of its restoration and conversion to a dwelling.*

*The Old Forge is a traditional cob-built Devon building and is of considerable architectural and historical interest, for its surviving phases of lateral stack and forge structures, representing a more complex layered domestic and working narrative. It has been compromised by late 20<sup>th</sup> century repairs after a devastating fire, including the loss of most of the front elevation and roof.*

*The conversion of this building will ensure its long-term survival, as a lack of maintenance in the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and poor-quality modern repairs led to significant risk to its historic integrity and structural cohesion.*

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June 2020

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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THE CLIENT (FOR ACCESS)  
DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT TEAM  
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## PROJECT CREDITS

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

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**LOCATION:** THE OLD FORGE  
**PARISH:** MONKKEHAMPTON  
**DISTRICT:** WEST DEVON  
**COUNTY:** DEVON  
**NGR:** SS 58423 05403  
**SWARCH REF.** MOF20  
**PLANNING APPLICATION NO:** 13016/19/FUL  
**OASIS NUMBER:** SOUTHWES1-395965

### 1.1 PROJECT BACKGROUND

South West Archaeology Ltd. (SWARCH) was commissioned by a Private Client (the Client) to undertake a desk-based assessment and historic building recording for The Old Forge, Monkkehampton, Devon. This work was undertaken in accordance with best practice, Devon County Council Guidance and CIfA guidelines.

### 1.2 TOPOGRAPHICAL AND GEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

The Old Forge is located in the centre of the village, at the main road junction. The B3217 runs through the village, linking the villages of Iddesleigh and Exbourne and the small market town of Hatherleigh is 4.1km to the west (see Figure 1). The site lies at a height of approximately 97m (AOD). The soils of this area are Teme alluvial group, deep and stoneless, permeable silty soils, affected by groundwater and with gravelly subsoils. (SSEW 1984). These overlie the inter-bedded sedimentary bedrock of mudstone, silt stone and sandstones of the Holsworthy Group, laid down in the Carboniferous Period (BGS 2020).

### 1.3 HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

The Old Forge is itself on the Devon HER (MDV84171), the thatched cottages next door, incorporating the former Post Office and stores are also on the HER, identified as early 18<sup>th</sup> century (MDV34341/98349) and Grade II Listed (IUD:1308746), a narrow contiguous range, of cob construction with brick stacks and thatched roofs. A Reading Room is noted opposite the Forge (MDV34343/98338) cottage of 18<sup>th</sup> century cob construction and thatched roof, with 19<sup>th</sup> century outshuts, converted into a Parish Room. Further along the opposite lane is another pair of thatched 18<sup>th</sup> century, or earlier cottages, Seldon Cottages 1 & 2, Rectory Cottages (MDV94766). Just north of the Old Forge, at the next road junction is Ivy Cottage, also believed to be 18<sup>th</sup> century, or older, on the HER (MDV94767) and a Grade II Listed building (IUD:1105191).

The Devon Historic Landscape Characterisation defines the landscape to the south-west, south-east and east of the village as *Post-Medieval Enclosures*, with *Medieval Enclosures and Strip Fields* further east, north-east and north, with *Water Meadows* to the north-west and west, enclosed in the late medieval period. Monkkehampton is classified as a *Historic Settlement*. This evidences a complex landscape of established farmland and later enclosed lowland heath, with broad, shallow river valleys. This is the historic working-character agricultural heartland of Devon. There is no significant archaeological fieldwork recorded on the Devon Historic Environment Record within a 1km radius of the property.

Lysons (1814) records the parish as being in the *historic Hundred* of Black Torrington and deanery of Oakhampton (Okehampton). In Lysons the village and Parish are referred to in their earlier form of 'Monk Oakhampton'. Lysons also notes the manor was recorded in the Domesday Book of 1086 as

Monacoochamtone and belonged to Baldwin de Brioniis. The manor ended up being held by the Abbey of Glastonbury and several notable Devonshire families are associated with holdings in the Manor and Parish, including the Langfords, Berrys and Pynes.

#### 1.4 METHODOLOGY

The historic building recording was conducted by Emily Wapshott in June 2020. The work was undertaken in accordance with a WSI (Boyd 2020) drawn up in consultation with DCHET and West Devon Council. The recording works are in line with best practice and follows the guidance outlined in: ClfA's *Standard and Guidance for the Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings or Structures* (2014 updated June 2019) and Historic England's *Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Processes* (2016). The discussion of the buildings' setting follows the approaches outlined in the appropriate guidance (DoT guidance and Historic England 2015).

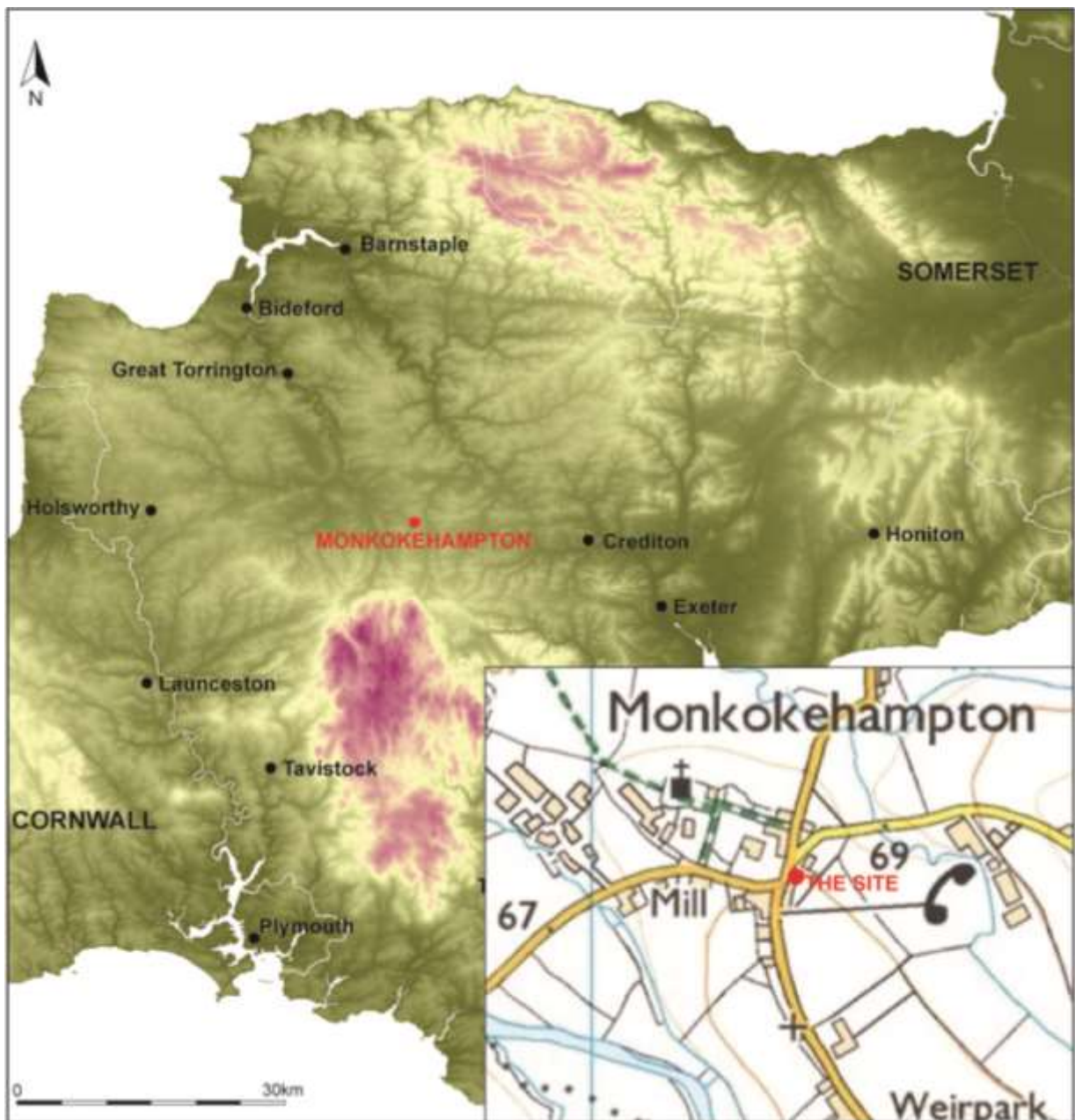


FIGURE 1: SITE LOCATION (THE SITE IS INDICATED).

## 1.5 CARTOGRAPHIC RECORD

The 1840 tithe map of Monkokehampton and Apportionment of 1845 (Figure 3) records The Old Forge building as a longer range, narrow and rectangular in plan. It is owned and occupied by a William Bowden, **Plot 11**, noted as 'House, Smithery & c.' The Old Forge is marked in grey, an upstanding, non-domestic building. The plot includes the row of Listed cottages next door to the Forge, seemingly at this stage just a single occupancy dwelling. **Plot 191** is marked as 'garden', also belonging to William, which is just to the north out of the village.

The 1841 census records William as the 'Blacksmith' and that he lives in 'Bowdens Cottage'. He is 45 and his wife Mary is 40. They have five sons; twins, John and William who are 15, Thomas who is 13, Henry who is 8, James who is 4. They also have two daughters; Mary 6 and Ann who is 2. There is also an infant, 'N.K' (not known), who is marked as two weeks or two months old. Also marked as within William's household is a William Northaway(?) who is 50 and a Mary Northaway, who is 20. 'Bowdens Cottage' obviously was divided as a range, as another family, the Cockwills, are noted as living there too, in a separate household; William Cockwill is 40, his wife Charity, the same age, and he is an agricultural labourer. They have two children, William, Shadewick (Shadrach?) and an Elizabeth Northaway is also noted as part of this household, being 2 months old.

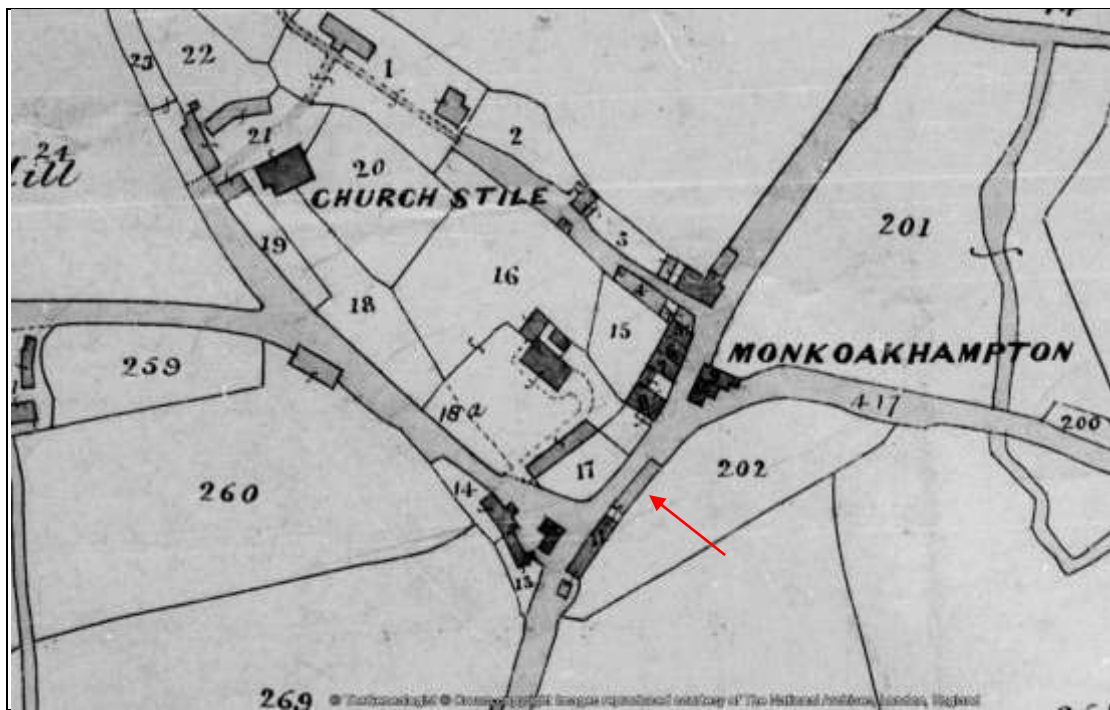


FIGURE 2: EXTRACT OF THE MONKKEHAMPTON TITHE MAP OF C.1840. THE SITE IS INDICATED (MAP: THE GENEALIST).

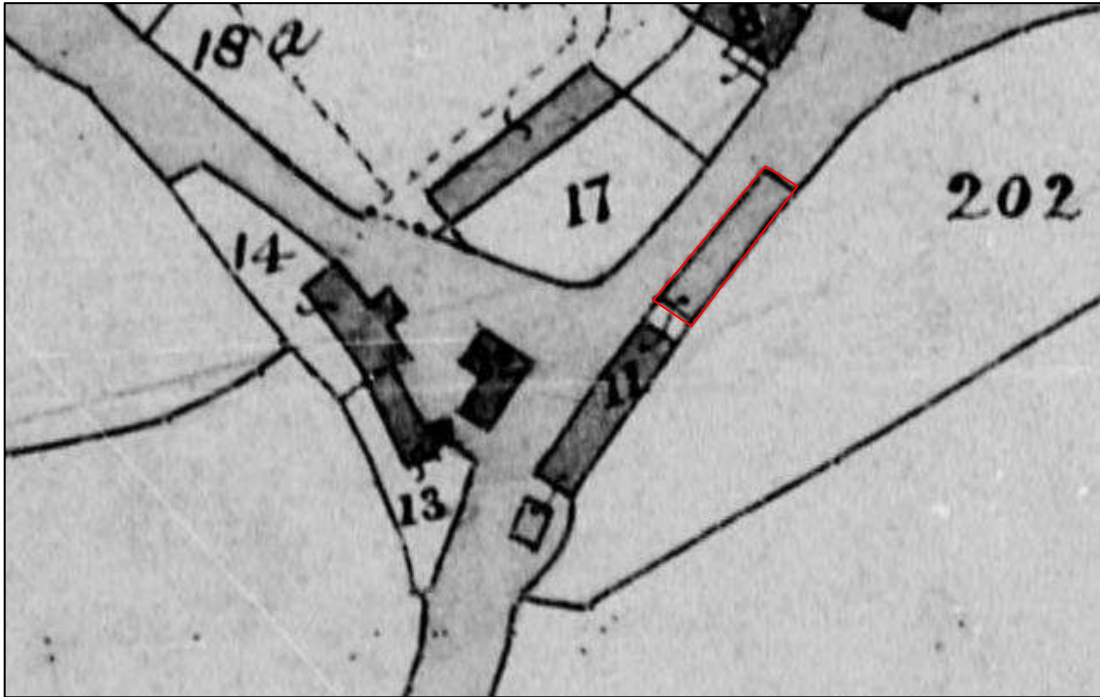


FIGURE 3: DETAILED EXTRACT OF THE TITHE MAP OF 1840, SHOWING THE SIMPLE LINEAR RANGE OF THE SMITHERY (OLD FORGE), WHICH APPEARS TO BE LONGER, THAN THE CURRENT STANDING BUILDING (MAP: THE GENEALOGIST).

The 1851 census records William and Mary as still residing at *Bowdens Cottage* and Smithy; William is still marked as a '*Blacksmith*'. Their youngest children are still resident with them; Mary, James, Ann and Samuel (presumably the new unnamed baby from the 1841 census).

The 1861 census records the Bowden family as still resident, but now spells their surname as *Bowders*; William and Mary are now in their 60s but William is still in charge as the '*Blacksmith*'. All but their two younger children have moved on, Ann is a dressmaker and resident with her parents and Samuel, their youngest child, has taken on his father's profession and is also noted as a '*Blacksmith*'. They are marked as resident at *Bowdens Cottage* and *Smiths Shop*. The Cockwell family, William and Charity (misspelled as Chenty) are still in the village, with William Northway (Netherway), their lodger, now 64, still resident. William, his son Shadrach and William Netherway are all marked down as labourers. In the same plots, possibly the heavily divided former Bowdens Cottage range seen on the 1888 map, is a '*grocers shop*', '*village*' and '*cottage*', all separate households.

The 1871 census records the Bowden family still present at the Smithy. William and Mary's middle son, Henry, has now taken over and is the '*Blacksmith*' for the community. Samuel, who was working as a smith under his father, may have gone on to take up his own smithy elsewhere, as we know James certainly has in this period, noted as a smith in Chagford. Henry is 38 and his wife Charlotte is 39; they have five children. There is a young assistant school master, George Reed, in their household; an apprentice blacksmith, John Ridgo and an Eliza Jones, a house servant. Henry's sister Ann is still in the village, married as Ann Buckingham, still a dress maker and her daughter Marion has followed in her profession. Charlotte is noted as a '*needlewoman*', so the female dressmaking family profession is obviously being maintained.



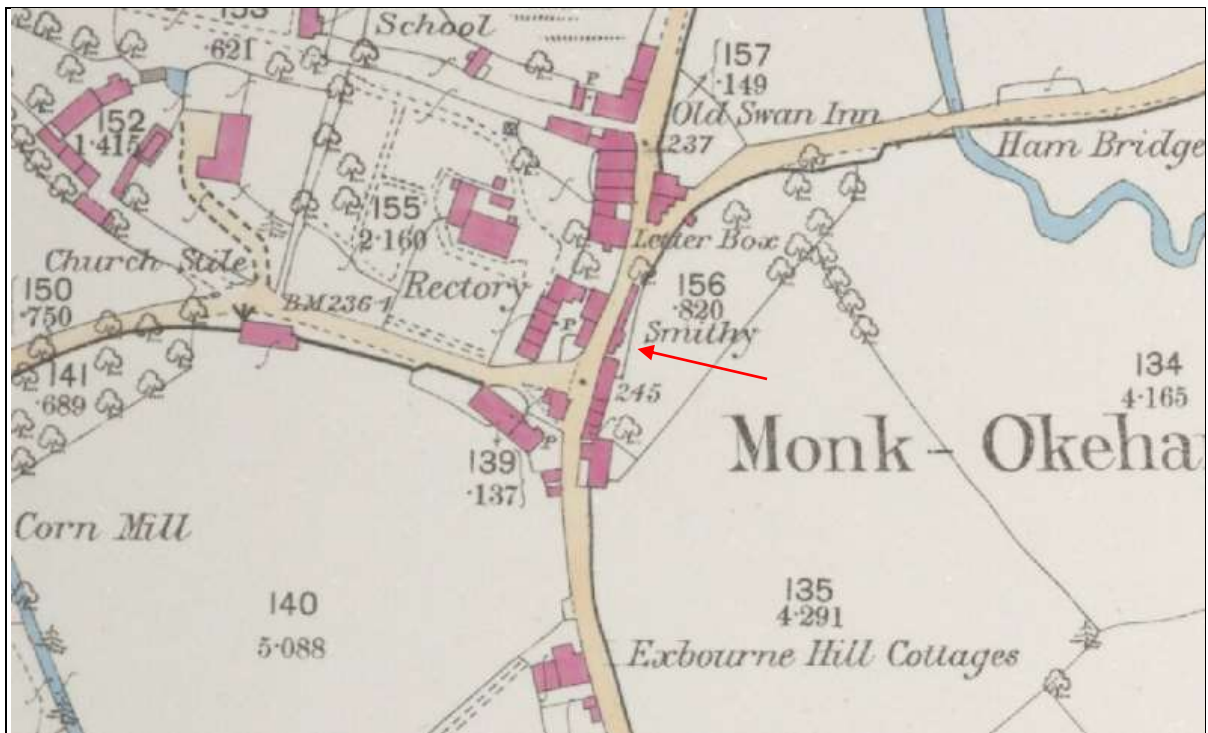


FIGURE 4: EXTRACT OF FIRST EDITION TWENTY-FIVE INCH OS MAP; THE SITE IS INDICATED; PUBLISHED 1888 (NLS).

The 1881 census records the Bowden family still resident in the village; Henry must have died as Charlotte is marked as head of a household, a needlewoman, but now living in a location marked as 'village', likely a generic cottage, or possibly one of the subdivisions of former Bowdens Cottages. Charlotte has two of her daughters still living with her, Emma, now a servant, and Charlotte, a scholar. Ann Buckingham and her family are still in the village. James Bowden, Henry's younger brother, is in the 1881 census marked as a 'Master Smith' in Chagford, with his family, continuing the family profession further afield and possibly the last of William and Marys sons to survive.

A John Vanstone is marked on the 1881 census as the 'Smith' for the village, with an apprentice smith, John Brake, and journeyman smith, Richard Hele(wich)? John Brake is John Vanstone's brother-in-law; John's wife Elizabeth is marked as 'Smiths wife' aged 26 and they have one son, called William, who is one year old.

By the 1888 First Edition OS Map (Figure 4) the building has considerably changed, but is clearly marked as the 'Smithy'. A small extension has been built on its south gable, within the walled courtyard between it and the house to the south. A long, very narrow extension has been built along the road, attached to the 'smithy's' north gable and the wide veranda looks to have been constructed along the centre of the rear range, as the element we know to be the 'smithy' is wider than the rest of the range. All of the elongated range is marked in pink, as domestic, suggesting the long extension is a row of small workers cottages. The house as occupied by William Bowden on the Tithe Map has been divided into a series of smaller domestic units and extended to the south end. By the 1904 Second Edition Map, published in 1906, the building is unchanged and is still clearly marked as 'Smithy'.

In the 1901 census the Vanstone family are still in residence at the Smithy, which is a general blacksmiths workshop; their older son Samuel, however, is following a specific path, being a 'shoeing blacksmith' and one of their younger sons, John is also an 'apprentice shoeing blacksmith'; which later became known as a 'farrier'. Their other son William is the Assistant Postman in the village.

We can see from the 1954 1:2,500 OS Map (Figure 5) the long extension of probable cottages to the

north have been knocked down and replaced with the large detached house now known as Forge Cottage. The Smithy is shown as the shorter rectangular plan detached building, which stands today, with the small irregular construction extension shown marked in hatching on the south gable.

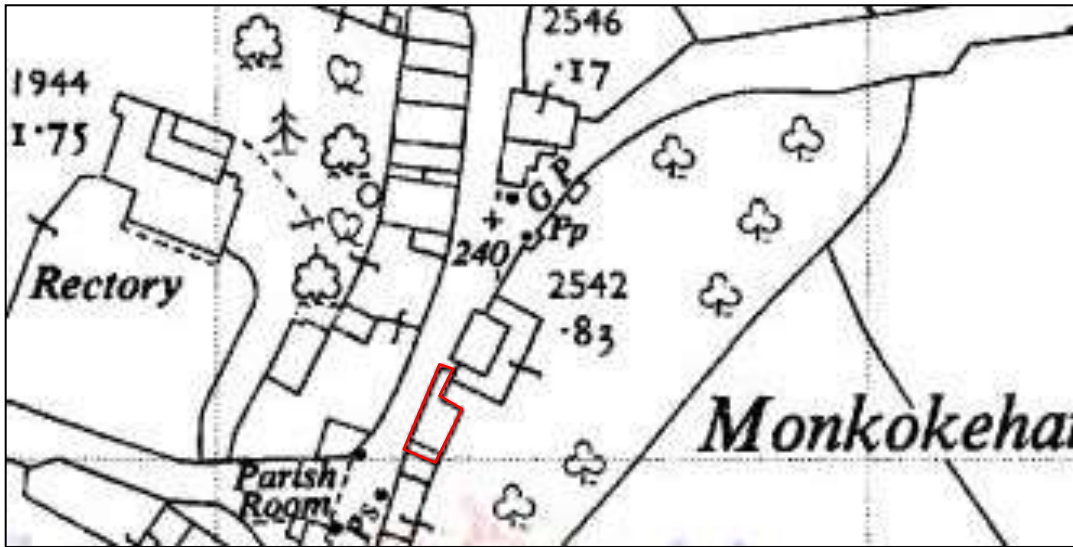


FIGURE 5: DETAILED EXTRACT OF THE 1954 1:2,500 OS MAP, SHOWING THE MID 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY HOUSE NOW REPLACING THE COTTAGES TO THE NORTH OF THE OLD FORGE; THE SITE IS INDICATED.

## 2.0 HISTORIC BUILDING RECORDING

### 2.1 SITE DESCRIPTION

The Old Forge or, 'Smithy' stands on the main street in Monkokehampton at Deckport Cross, its long, west-facing elevation forming the boundary at the edge of the road; behind, to the east, is a large rectangular garden, tapering to the end, divided by modern fences from the other plots behind the adjacent houses. On the south side, the Old Forge is framed by a row of attached Listed thatched cottages, a sub-division of a former single dwelling. Within this row are the historic village stores and Post Office, demarked by the large shop bay window which survives, although all are now domestic dwellings. On the north side it is flanked by a mid-20<sup>th</sup> century (post-WWII) detached brick house, known as Forge Cottage.

The wider area is of simple agricultural working farmed character, the villagescape is of rural residential character, the majority of houses within the immediate setting being rendered cob with thatch roofs. A small 'square' or communal village area has been remodeled into a village car park to offset the narrowness of the roads and general lack of parking provision from the attached rows of cottages. The presence of so many large modern vehicles, metal chain link fencing and such a large tarmac area does notably detract from the otherwise cohesive historic views within the village.



FIGURE 6: THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE HISTORIC BUILDING AND MID-20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY DETACHED HOUSE ON THE NORTH SIDE OF THE OLD FORGE, WITH 2M SCALE; FROM THE SOUTH-WEST.

## 2.2 BUILDING DESCRIPTION

The Old Forge survives as a low, single storey structure on a north-south alignment, of narrow rectangular plan. Externally it is cement rendered, of fine-grain pebble dash, with a corrugated cement-fibre sheeting roof, painted barge boards and metal painted guttering and downpipes; the roof pitch is steep and the building is gabled to the north and south ends. Since the exterior is uniformly rendered for much of the structure the interior face of the walls are discussed.

The front, west wall, facing onto the road has been almost completely rebuilt in concrete blocks. To the centre of the west elevation is a double-width cart door (D1), with two-leaf stable door to south and one full-leaf door to north, both of modern narrow plank form, with ledging bars and braces and good hand-made strap hinges, heavy bolts and catches. At the north end, a low wide hatch (W1) is set with a wide sill and a pair of relatively recent plank shutters, again with good strap hinges and bolt fixings. To the south end, for c.3m, it is of surviving loose stone rubble in lime mortar, rising to c.1m. Above, the wall is constructed of dense pale brown cob, with lots of crushed shale fragment inclusions and small stones. At this south end, there is a narrow low doorway (D4), with beaded frame and modern plank door, with ledging bars and braces, with a heavy bolt fixing and hand-made strap hinges. There is an adjacent large square window opening (W3), on the north side of the door. This window has a two-light beaded window frame, with a large casement to north and small hopper opener above a fixed pane to south.

The north gable end has been partly rebuilt in concrete blocks on the north-west corner; the rest of the elevation is of cob on a low stone rubble plinth, of c.0.25-0.3m. The plinth is of semi-coursed stonework, in a cob/clay bond. The cob is of two phases, up to c.1.65m above internal floor level it is of a rich pale brown colour, densely packed, with crushed shale and finely chopped leveling layers of straw. Within the lower phase of cob there are clear tamping lines representing individual days work during the build. At c.1.65m there is a clear build line. The cob above the build line is much looser packed, of coarser texture and of yellow brown colour, with inclusions of larger stones, crushed shale, but significantly fewer organic inclusions. Above, the gable apex has been rebuilt in concrete block. There is one narrow doorway on the north-west corner (D3); this is under a long timber chunky lintel, with the east side of the doorway clearly reduced and infilled in a reddish-brown cob mixed with stone rubble in lime mortar and some brickwork. The doorframe has been reworked, the jambs are well shaped, chunky, and plain, with pegged sawn-off tops; the top rail is a rougher timber, the doorframe obviously refitted. The door is of relatively modern narrow plank style, ledged and braced, with heavy bolt catch and external strap hinges. On the inner face there is a row of small timber ties/pegs for a previous fixing at c.1.5m from the floor.

The long rear east wall is contiguous with the north gable; it too is of cob on a low stone plinth, c.0.3-0.35m. The stone rubble is of local slate stone, mudstone and shale varieties and is roughly coursed, in a cob bond. The cob is of two phases, the build line wrapping around the north-east corner and onto the long elevation. Up to c.1.65m above internal floor level the cob is of a rich pale brown colour, densely packed, with crushed shale and finely chopped leveling layers of straw. Within the lower phase of cob there are clear tamping lines representing individual day's work during the build. At c.1.65m there is a clear build line. The cob above the build line is much looser packed, of coarser texture and of a yellow brown colour, with larger stones, crushed shale, but significantly fewer organic inclusions. At the north end, the elevation has been raised at the eaves in concrete blocks, it survives taller to the south end, but there is another build line, with a darker grey cob mix, which is very stony, raising the wall by c.0.3m. Above this, to infill the different pitch height to the verandah, the space is boarded-in with asbestos sheet board over a modern timber frame, c.1940s.

The east elevation is the most historically interesting with several key features. At the north end of the elevation there is an in situ horizontal timber attached to a set of pegs, which has hooks for tools. To the north end there is also a long narrow opening (W2), intended most likely for a sash window,

this has a thick oak plank sill; the opening is in-filled to the lower half with a darker grey coarse cob. A small square, two-light pegged wooden window frame has been inserted above, with metal straps attached to the outside forming security bars. The sides of the opening have been boarded out with planks showing evidence of having been recycled from commercial wooden crates. On the south jamb of this window the woodwork has been graffitied and has lots of scratch, burn and brand marks. South of the window, just north of the centre point of the long elevation is a large lateral stack, also in cob, this rises to c.1.5-1.65m high and externally has a part surviving staged thatch roof. The lateral stack shows it was boxy and c.0.95m wide on the interior, tapering to c.0.75m. The chimney shaft sharply tapered inwards, showing this was only a single storey structure. The base of the stack has a taller stone rubble plinth, rising to c.0.4-0.45m. The stack clearly abuts the main building, with a clear build line between the stack cob walls and the rear east wall. There is a narrow slightly cranked timber lintel across the open fireplace, this has a narrow chamfer and run out stops. The lintel is carried on reused timber pads which stretch c.0.5m into the cob of the stack, tying together the structures. The northern pad is a cut length of a massive chamfered beam, probably a fragment of a 17<sup>th</sup> century or medieval beam. The back of the stack has fallen out and the cob has been repaired in concrete blocks. South of the stack there is a door in the wall (D2); the lintel has been raised on this opening, which was once exceptionally low. The timber lintel is heavy, crudely chamfered, and shaped. It now sits on stone rubble and bricks in lime mortars, patched in cement, inserted underneath to raise its height. This door is c.2.5m from the south gable and its position could be considered suggestive of a cross passage. There are small peg holes for fixings just to the south of this doorway, possibly indicating the location of a timber plank partition at some stage.

Externally along the east wall at this south end is a veranda, accessed through the rear doorway (D2). It is constructed of modern rafters and timber posts and has a continuous catslide corrugated concrete-fiber sheeting roof with the rest of the building. At the north end of this are some older far more weathered posts, both pegged together and attached with straps, these are built around and abut the lateral stack and may date to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Within these there is a doorframe and hinges, suggestive of this once having been enclosed to a further extent than it is now. It is built onto and into a loose stone rubble hedge bank, where the soil of the garden is 1m higher to the back-garden area. The cob of the east wall here, however, has not been rendered due to the weather protection of the veranda and we can see that the east wall and south gable are contiguous, that the wall was quite battered on the outer face, especially at the south-east corner and that this has been hacked back and under-built in brick to provide wider access around the building.

The south gable of the building is of contiguous cob construction, again on a low rubble base, as with the north wall, it has a low stone rubble plinth, much repaired in brick, c.0.25-0.3m. The cob is of two phases, up to c.2m above internal floor level it is of a rich pale brown colour, densely packed, with crushed shale and finely chopped leveling layers of straw. Within the lower phase of cob there are clear tamping lines representing individual day's work during the build. At c.2m there is a clear build line; the cob above becomes much looser packed, of coarser texture and yellow brown in colour. It has inclusions of stones and crushed shale, but significantly fewer organic inclusions. There are tamping lines in this upper phase of cob too and it rises to a pointed gable apex on this elevation. To the east side there is a lot of surviving burnt thatch, with timber fixing staves and woven ties. There are purlin sockets set into the roofline, crudely patched. Just below the build line there are two broken stick joists or fixings for a fitting of some kind. There are some other holes for pegs also suggesting at least shelves or similar once occupied at least the south-east corner. The wall has been damaged at the base on the inside face and has been under-built in brick in cement, with earlier lime mortar patching visible beneath. To the centre of the elevation a shallow flue has been cut, serving a small square box-hearth cut into the elevation at c.1-1.25m from the floor, with timber and slate framing. The opening is now blocked with brickwork in cement mortar. A further small square opening framed with modern timber has been cut into the elevation just west of the former flue, it appears to be a machinery shaft, with iron fixings associated. The mid-20<sup>th</sup> century iron electrical service box is also to be found here, in the south-west corner, now an interesting vintage item.

South of the south gable, there is an L-shaped timber boarded structure (R1B), an extension; this is classically mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, with beaded boarded planking to the interior and corrugated tin sheeting to the exterior, over a timber frame. This extends the space to the south, respecting the extension of the west cob wall, which may represent the remains of a secondary small shop or office outshut, for the forge.

The roof of the building was wholly replaced in the later 1940s or 1950s. It is of dark-stained/tanalised pine A-frame trusses, with heavy bolted joints. There are a number of lightweight purlins to each pitch which carry the corrugated cement fiber sheeting. There are five main trusses over the main forge (1A) and two over the small south extension (1B).

Accessed at the former cart door the interior of the Old Forge is divided into two main spaces. The largest of these is Room 1A, the cob building, containing the main forge. This has a poured raised concrete floor to the south end; the north end is much lower with an earth floor. The interior walls are of exposed concrete block or cob. A large serving shelf, carried on modern iron L-shaped brackets serves the hatch (W1) in the front wall at the north end. There is a large concrete block against the east wall, under the window and next to the original open fireplace which has heavy iron screw-threads and bolts for a fixing for a piece of heavy machinery. There is a compressor type engine, abandoned in-situ also within this northern section of the space. There are numerous historic iron farming tools, shovels and scythes, etc., otherwise the building was filled with debris and junk and has recently been cleared. No further forge fittings survive, but there are some good mid-20<sup>th</sup> century metal light fittings.



FIGURE 7: THE INTERIOR OF THE OLD FORGE, ROOM 1A, WITH 2M SCALE; FROM THE SOUTH-EAST.

The forge structure itself is of stone rubble to the rear in a cob and lime mix mortar, braced with iron straps and heavy scantling recycled beams; the hearth is of massive slate stones, with some very large oak timbers recycled to brace the stack. A brick chimney rises at an angle from this through the roof, topped by a terracotta chimney pot. The front of the forge and working area has been extended

in brick and stone rubble, of much poorer quality. This projects about c.1m from the stack, it is mortared in lime and patched with cement mortars. The raised concrete floor of the southern area abuts the forge structure. The forge is strapped to and braced off the large oak lintel in the east wall, blocking the southern half of the earlier domestic-character open fireplace.

Room 1B occupies the extension to the south. It can be accessed via the rear door in R1A (D2) and an opening at the south end of the veranda (D5), or from the street (D4). It also has a poured concrete floor and there is a tall square concrete column also with screw-threads and bolts for fixing a machine, which is situated near the south gable of the main cob building, on the north side of this room, opposite a large area of cement render patching and the shaft cut into the cob, leading back to R1A. There are also a set of posts to the east side, which suggest a partition enclosed the last eastern 2m of this as a corridor along the rear of the building. In the rear wall, within the boarding, there are two small square windows, both two light opening casements, contemporary and integral to the 1940s/1950s boarded structure.

Within this space, the south gable of the building is exposed and it can be seen that there is the roofline of an earlier much smaller outshut, c.2.5-3m wide, defined by socket holes for purlins and scars on the walls, where the wall has been patched in concrete render. There are no other fittings surviving within this space.



FIGURE 8: ROOM 1B INTERIOR OF THE EXTENSION TO THE OLD FORGE, FROM THE SOUTH-WEST (2M SCALE).

### 2.2.1 FUNCTIONS OF THE BUILDING

The Old Forge (R1A) obviously has an older heritage as a domestic-character building of some sort, presumably a cottage, or cottages similar to those which survive to the south, hence the rear cob stack. However, in the later post-medieval period, or 19<sup>th</sup> century the building was reworked into a Smithy; R1B may be a shop added to the range or an office hence the door and window being different in character, more domestic.

### 2.2.2 RELATIONSHIPS OF SPACES WITHIN THE BUILDING AND STRUCTURAL ELEMENTS

The main Room 1A comprises the original building, the cottage converted into a forge. The end room, Room 1B is a two-phase altered extension on the south gable. The verandah abuts both on the east side.

### 2.3 SIGNIFICANT FEATURES WITHIN THE BUILDING

The features of significance in the Old Forge range are the earlier domestic cob stack to the east rear wall of Room 1A and the stone and brick rubble forge built onto the front, also in Room 1A. There is also a significant amount of cut and burnt/branded graffiti on the boarded window opening (W2) to the side of the forge, which is of social and historical interest.



FIGURE 9: THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE FORGE AND EARLIER FIREPLACE IN ROOM 1A; FROM THE NORTH-WEST, WITH 2M SCALE.





FIGURE 10: THE GRAFFITI ON THE BOARDED RIGHT HAND JAMB OF THE WINDOW IN THE WEST WALL OF ROOM 1A; FROM THE WEST.

## 2.4 HISTORIC PHASING

### 2.4.1 PHASE 1 – PRE-1800 BUILDING

The earliest fabric in the building makes up the north, south and east cob walls, below the build line, sat on the low plinth of semi coursed rubble stone. Whilst this building is vernacular and traditional, only the damaged and compromised structural remains survive; we have no definitive dating evidence or functional evidence.

The weight of the walls and only slight battering is suggestive of a later date of build, in character pointing to a post medieval date for construction. We do not have surviving evidence of a form of heating for this building and whilst we can speculate, due to its village position, that it is an early dwelling, possibly of single cell form, it may also have been an in-town barn, later adapted. The rear door, which has been altered but seems correct, is positioned in such a way that it could suggest a cross passage here, with a small space to the south for services and a larger living area to the north.

### 2.4.1 PHASE 2 – PRE-1800 DWELLING – ADDITION OF STACK

The lateral stack was then added to the rear of the building, with a clear build line between it and the wall. This stack appears to have been positioned to heat the living space of the building. Potentially confirming it as an earlier domestic structure, although it is not out of all possibility this documents a conversion to domestic use. When considered spatially with the rear door, the lateral stack position could be considered to confirm a simple Open Hall plan of: living area to north, cross passage offset to south and small area of stores or service c.2-2.5m wide at the very south end.

The timber lintel which braces the open fireplace of the lateral stack is chamfered with run out stops, but the scantling of the timber is quite slight and the chamfer is narrow. The slightly arched character of the beam has been viewed in other 18<sup>th</sup> century examples. This evidence represents a small cottage, probably two-cell, one and a half storeys, or with a sleeping loft, with a thatched roof as

seen elsewhere in the village. This building was of simple domestic character, small and of low status, it may have housed an agricultural worker. The lateral stack being c.18<sup>th</sup> century would suggest the building it addresses is earlier.

#### 2.4.2 PHASE 3 – EARLY 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY

The cottage fell into disrepair or may have suffered damage; it was remodeled as a single storey building with the walls rationalized to a low gable to north and south. A large stone rubble forge was built onto the front of the earlier fireplace in the former living space of the cottage; this first forge was built in cob and lime mix and reused massive slates and heavy timbers from the earlier building. We know the cottage had already been converted into a Smithy by the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, as it is recorded as such in the Tithe of 1840 and census of 1841. The family who own and occupy it also own and part-occupy a range of cottages called Bowdens Cottage(s) and therefore this house-work place arrangement may have been quite well established.

A small outshut is added to this new single storey building, the roof timbers set into the new cob gable to the south. This new building may just be a wood or coal store or similar, as it is only c.2.5-3m in width.

#### 2.4.3 PHASE 4 - MID TO LATER 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY

The forge itself is extended, adapted and repaired with a mixed stone and brick-rubble phase; this incorporated, at the base, some yellow sandstone dressed blocks and even one with a possible weathered roll-moulding on the corner. We know from documentary sources and buildings evidence that the church was almost completely rebuilt (but for the tower) in 1855, so the fine sandstone fragments may have been taken from discarded stone in the village, at this time. We can see that the smithing in Monkkehampton was continued into the late 19<sup>th</sup> century by the Vanstone family, with several sons taking over, one after the other, it is quite likely that the forge, a busy local amenity for the farmers, carters, etc., was constantly being repaired, improved and adapted to fit changing client demands.

The outshut on the south end of the range was demolished and extended as a proper small cob structure which provided more space for the smithing business and may have had a specialised separate function or even have been a shop selling handmade wares, considering the door and window arrangement, facing the street.

#### 2.4.4 PHASE 5 – POST 1940S FIRE

In the 1940s, there was apparently a dreadful fire in the forge and the historic roof and thatch was lost. In putting out the fire it is thought too much water damage was done to the front cob elevation, and it collapsed. The building was once again repaired, this time the cob walls were patched or raised in concrete block and a new roof constructed in corrugated sheeting. The forge continued in use, in its new form until at least the 1990s, when the *Devon Villages Book* by the Federation of Women's Institutes colloquially records a Mr. Herbert Vanstone being the Smith here and having taken over from his father, grandfather and great grandfather. This would suggest that the Bowden family were replaced by another multi-generational dynasty of Blacksmiths. Having lain empty and used as a store and tip for at least a decade the building was sold for conversion in the last 12 months.



FIGURE 11: DETAIL OF THE FORGE AND EARLIER DOMESTIC FIREPLACE; FROM THE NORTH-WEST (1M SCALE).

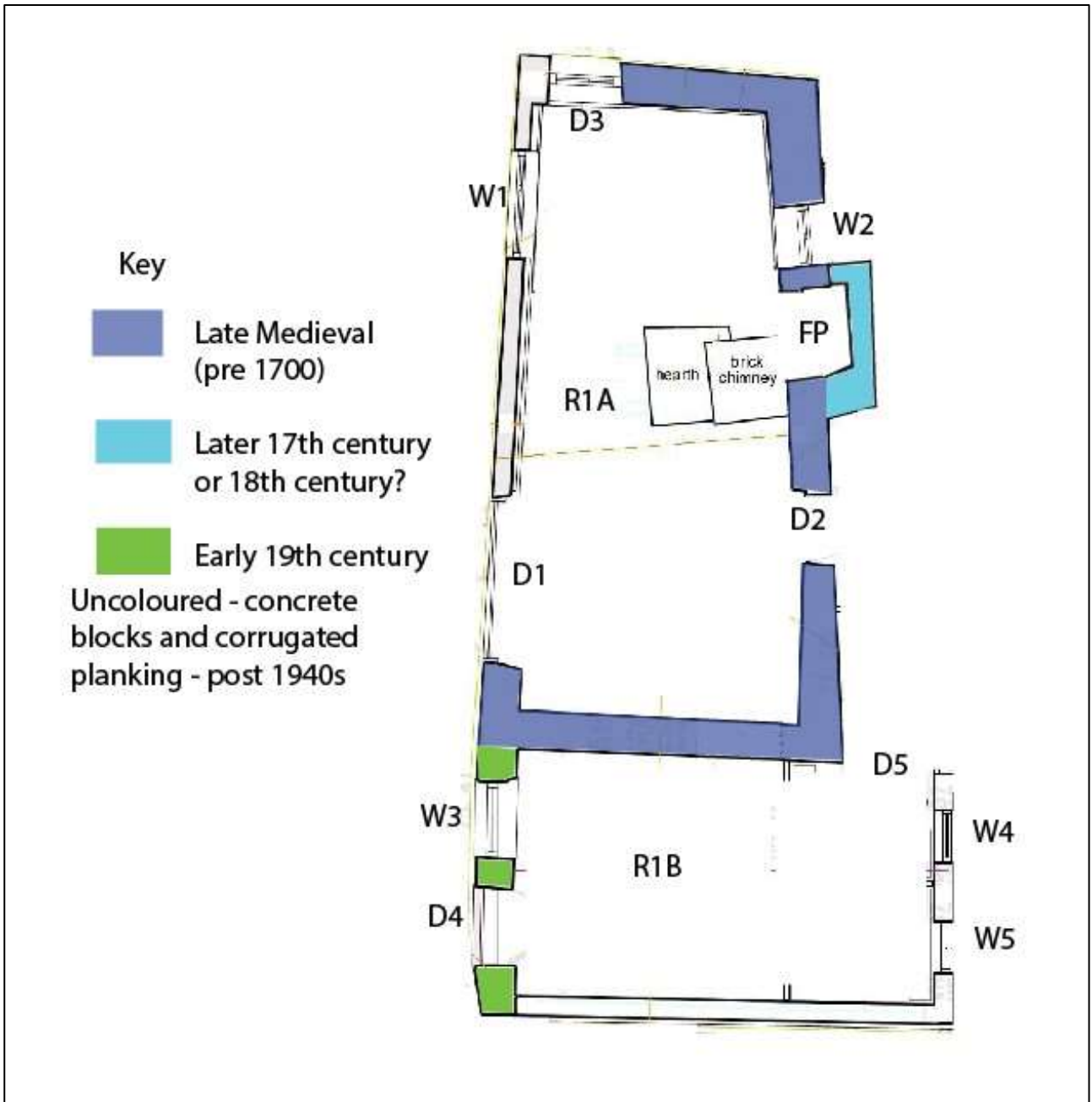


FIGURE 12: PROVISIONAL PHASED PLAN (BASED ON PLANS PROVIDED BY ARCHITECTS AT TIME OF SURVEY).

## 2.5 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The forge is noted on the Devon HER as a traditional vernacular working building. It is built of local materials, with cob wall and once had a thatched roof. It is not merely an interesting post-medieval forge, but is in origin an earlier domestic cottage, converted into a forge, having a more interesting and diverse narrative than previously appreciated. It is not Listed but is an undesignated heritage asset and is expected to be conserved through conversion. It is locally important to the wider village character and views, as part of the historic cornerstone of the community with its former historic post office and stores, its church and former public house.

If we apply the Historic England classifications of value to the building, to explain the level of significance applied:

### 2.5.1 EVIDENTIAL VALUE

High. The site will seal occupation layers beneath it, being in the centre of the village. The cob structure of the walls also contain post-medieval pottery from at least the 17<sup>th</sup> century, so could provide dating evidence and the surviving areas of layered historic thatch could also be assessed for more information.

### 2.5.2 HISTORICAL VALUE

Medium. The building was the local forge, an important building within the day-to-day life of the village and vital to the local economy of a farming area, both before and after mechanisation.

### 2.5.3 AESTHETIC VALUE

Medium. The front wall has been rebuilt in concrete blocks but it has been rendered which, externally at least, balances out the effect, as most houses in the village are rendered. The loss of the thatched roof obviously affects its visual impact. However, the forge does retain its visual power as an authentic, as yet unconverted working rural building, of clear historic character and discernible function.

### 2.5.4 COMMUNAL VALUE

None. The buildings have no known communal value.

### 2.5.5 AUTHENTICITY & INTEGRITY

The forge is very authentic as a now redundant working building of rural agricultural-adjacent character, with its plank shutters to the hatch, its forge and cart doors. Its integrity was much damaged by the fire but it retained its character and the building we see today is at least 60% of that which was remodelled as a forge and even contains features such as the stack from its first domestic life.

### **3.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

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The Old Forge is a traditional cob-built Devon building and is of considerable architectural and historical interest, for its surviving phases of lateral stack and forge structures, representing a more complex layered domestic and working narrative. It has been compromised by late 20<sup>th</sup> century repairs after a devastating fire, including the loss of most of the front elevation and roof.

The conversion of this building will ensure its long-term survival, as a lack of maintenance in the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and poor-quality modern repairs led to significant risk to its historic integrity and structural cohesion.

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APPENDIX 1: BUILDING RECORDING TABLES

West Front Wall	
External Face of Wall	Internal Face of Wall
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fine grain pebble-dash cement render; unpainted.</li> <li>• Painted timber barge boards</li> <li>• Painted iron guttering and downpipes</li> <li>• D1 – red painted, narrow plain stepped doorframe, thick weathered jambs, new top rail. Narrow plank stable door and narrow plank full leaf door, large plain external strap hinges, bar closing latch.</li> <li>• W1 – red painted hatch, plain timber frame.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concrete blocks in cement mortar</li> <li>• D1 – ledging bars and braces to both doors, bolt closing to top and middle of both doors. Concrete lintel to opening.</li> <li>• W1 – an open hatch, concrete lintel. Ledging bars and braces to interior face of shutters, bar closure and bolts. Concrete lintel to opening.</li> <li>• Internal thick plank shelf, very weathered, on L-shaped iron brackets.</li> </ul>
North Gable End	
External Face of Wall	Internal Face of Wall
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fine grain pebble-dash cement render; unpainted.</li> <li>• Painted timber barge boards</li> <li>• Painted iron guttering and downpipes.</li> <li>• D3 – narrow plank door to north-west corner, red painted, chunky plain frame. Heavy strap hinges.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cob on a low stone rubble plinth, of c.0.25-0.3m.</li> <li>• The cob is of two phases, up to c.1.65m it is of a rich pale brown colour, densely packed, with crushed shale and finely chopped leveling layers of straw. Clear tamping lines representing individual days' work during the build.</li> <li>• At c.1.65m there is a clear build line; the cob above becomes much looser packed, of coarser texture, of a yellow brown colour, with larger stones, crushed shale but significantly fewer organic inclusions.</li> <li>• Gable apex has been rebuilt in concrete block.</li> <li>• D3 - narrow doorway to the north-west corner; long timber chunky lintel, east side of the doorway narrowed with reddish-brown cob infill and stone rubble in lime, with some brickwork.</li> <li>• D3 - The doorframe has been reworked, the jambs are well shaped, plain, chunky, with pegged sawn-off tops; the top rail is a rougher timber, the doorframe obviously refitted.</li> <li>• D3 - The door itself is a modern narrow plank ledged and braced door, with heavy bolt catch and external strap hinges.</li> <li>• To the north-east end there is a row of small timber ties for a previous fixing at c.1.5m from the floor.</li> </ul>
East Rear Wall	
External Face of Wall	Internal Face of Wall
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fine grain pebble-dash cement render; unpainted.</li> <li>• Painted timber barge boards</li> <li>• Painted iron guttering and downpipes.</li> <li>• Projecting lateral box stack; some thatch survives to base of roof, significantly smoke blackened.</li> <li>• Remains of a burnt timber projecting, probable rafter end.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cob on a low stone plinth, c.0.3-0.35m.</li> <li>• The stone rubble is of local slate stone, mudstone and shale varieties and is roughly coursed, in a cob/clay bond.</li> <li>• The cob is of two phases, the build line wrapping around the north-east corner and onto the long elevation.</li> <li>• Up to c.1.65m above internal floor level the cob is of a rich pale brown colour, densely packed, with crushed shale and finely chopped leveling layers of straw. There</li> </ul>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• South end of the rear elevation there is a timber framed projecting veranda, with corrugated concrete fibre sheet roofing and earth floor.</li> <li>• Within the veranda, the east rear wall is of exposed cob on a stone rubble base c.0.3m.</li> <li>• The cob is covered by a thin outer layer of a cob type render or plaster, of a paler brown colour. Tamping layers can be seen within the cob and there is a build line at c.1.5m (from exterior floor level).</li> <li>• Above is a cob raise in a greyer colour.</li> <li>• Above is asbestos boarding enclosing steep pitched roofline. Modern timber framing, c.1940s.</li> </ul>	<p>are clear tamping lines representing individual days' work during the build.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At c.1.65m there is a clear build line; the cob becomes much looser packed, of coarser texture of a yellow brown colour, with larger stones, crushed shale but significantly fewer organic inclusions.</li> <li>• At the north end, the elevation has been raised at the eaves in concrete blocks, it survives taller to the south end, but there is another build line, with a darker grey cob mix, which is very stony, raising the wall by c.0.3m.</li> <li>• Above this to infill the different pitch height the space is boarded in with asbestos sheeting/boarding.</li> <li>• At the north end of the elevation there is an in situ horizontal timber attached to a set of pegs, which has pegs and hooks for tools.</li> <li>• At the south end of the wall, just south of D2 there are little plug/peg holes for fixings, as if a partition has been removed.</li> <li>• W2 - to the north there is a long narrow opening, this has a thick oak plank sill; the opening is in-filled to the lower half with a darker grey coarse cob.</li> <li>• W2 - a small square two light pegged wooden window frame has been inserted, with metal straps attached to the outside forming security bars.</li> <li>• W2 - the sides of the opening have been boarded out with planks.</li> <li>• W2 - on the south jamb of this window the woodwork has been graffitied and has lots of scratch, burn and brand marks.</li> <li>• FP - north of the center point of the long elevation is a large lateral stack, built of cob, this rises to c.1.5m high and externally has a part surviving staged thatch roof. The lateral stack is c.0.95m wide on the interior, tapering to c.0.75m. The chimney shaft sharply tapered inwards, showing this was only a single storey structure. The base of the stack has a taller stone rubble plinth, rising to c.0.4-0.45m.</li> <li>• The stack clearly abuts the main building, with a clear build line between. There is a narrow slightly cranked timber lintel across the open fireplace, this has a narrow chamfer and run out stops. The lintel is carried on reused timber pads which stretch c.0.5m into the cob of the stack. The northern pad is a cut length of a massive chamfered beam.</li> <li>• The back of the stack has fallen out and the cob has been repaired in concrete blocks.</li> <li>• D2 - south of the stack there is a doorway opening in the wall; the lintel has been raised on this opening, which was once exceptionally low. The lintel is heavy, crudely chamfered, and shaped. It now sits on stone rubble and bricks. This door is c.2-2.5m from the south gable and its position could be considered suggestive of a cross passage. No door or frame survives.</li> </ul>
South Gable End	
External Face of Wall (within extension)	Internal Face of Wall
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exposed cob patched with a lot of cement render.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rubble plinth, as to north gable c.0.25-0.3m.</li> <li>• The cob is of two phases, up to c.2m, it is of a rich pale</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• South-east corner under-built in brick in lime mortar.</li> <li>• Stone rubble base rises much higher, c.1m – under-built? Lime mortar, looser build, more slate stone.</li> <li>• Slate flashing and drip course and base of truncated brick chimney stack in lime mortar visible at apex.</li> <li>• Thatch survives in part to east side at top of cob wall.</li> <li>• Roofline of former outshut visible at gable apex, via purlin sockets.</li> <li>• A small square opening survives to the west side, at c.1.25m, framed with modern timber, it has been cut into the elevation, it appears to be a machinery shaft.</li> </ul>	<p>brown colour, densely packed, with crushed shale and finely chopped leveling layers of straw.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Within the lower phase of cob there are clear tamping lines representing individual days' work during the build.</li> <li>• At c.2m there is a clear build line; the cob above becomes much looser packed, of coarser texture of a yellow brown colour, with larger stones, crushed shale but significantly fewer organic inclusions.</li> <li>• There are tamping lines in this upper phase of cob too and it rises to a pointed gable apex on this elevation.</li> <li>• To the east side there is a lot of surviving burnt thatch.</li> <li>• There are purlin sockets here on the roofline, crudely patched with blobs of white lime mortar.</li> <li>• Just below the build line there are two broken stick joists or fixings for a fitting of some kind.</li> <li>• The wall has been damaged at the base and has been under-built in brick in cement, with earlier lime mortar patching visible beneath.</li> <li>• To the center a shallow flue has been cut, serving a small square forced hearth at c.1-1.25m from the floor, with timber and slate framing. The opening is now blocked with brickwork in cement mortar.</li> <li>• Small square opening forced into the wall to the west side, c.1.25m, framed in modern timber, with iron fixings associated.</li> </ul>
<b>South Extension – west front wall</b>	
<b>External Face of Wall</b>	<b>Internal Face of Wall</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fine grain pebble-dash cement render; unpainted.</li> <li>• Painted timber barge boards</li> <li>• Painted iron guttering and downpipes</li> <li>• D4 – Narrow plank door, brown Bakelite handle, iron key plate.</li> <li>• W3 – Two light beaded window in square opening. Casement to north, hopper casement to south above fixed pane. Unusual late 19<sup>th</sup> or early 1900s style; two small panes above a larger one, 'arts and crafts' influence. Window painted red, plain frame. Slate sill.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stone rubble base rising to c.1m.</li> <li>• Cob above, pale brown, densely packed.</li> <li>• D4 – plain frame, ledged and braced, iron lock. Very narrow timber lintel.</li> <li>• W3 – fine brass winding bar closure catch and bar closure for hopper, painted timber sill. Narrow timber lintel.</li> </ul>
<b>South Extension – east rear wall</b>	
<b>External Face of Wall</b>	<b>Internal Face of Wall</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corrugated tin sheeting bolted to timber frame.</li> <li>• W4- Small square, two light casement window, beaded frame.</li> <li>• W5 - Small square, two light casement window, beaded frame.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beaded narrow plank boarding.</li> <li>• Base rail nailed over planks instead of skirting.</li> <li>• Wooden frame beneath.</li> <li>• Small crude hook catches to W4 and W5 on internal side.</li> </ul>
<b>South Extension – south gable end wall</b>	
<b>External Face of Wall</b>	<b>Internal Face of Wall</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corrugated tin sheeting bolted to timber frame.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beaded narrow plank boarding.</li> <li>• Base rail nailed over planks instead of skirting.</li> <li>• Wooden frame beneath.</li> </ul>

APPENDIX 2: PHOTOGRAPHIC ARCHIVE



1. THE REAR, EAST ELEVATION OF THE OLD FORGE BUILDING, SHOWING THE VERANDA AND REAR BRICK STACK TO THE FORGE; FROM THE EAST.



2. LEFT: THE SOUTH GABLE OF THE EXTENSION, WITH CORRUGATED SHEETING C 1940S; FROM THE SOUTH-WEST.  
3. RIGHT: THE NORTH GABLE, RENDERED, WITH D3, 2M SCALE; FROM THE NORTH-WEST.



4. THE HATCH W1 IN THE FRONT WEST WALL OF THE BUILDING; FROM THE WEST.



5. D3, ON THE NORTH GABLE ELEVATION; FROM THE NORTH-NORTH-WEST.



6. LEFT: THE NORTH END OF THE EAST ELEVATION, WITH WINDOW AND PROJECTING LATERAL STACK, WITH 2M SCALE; FROM THE NORTH-NORTH-EAST.
7. RIGHT: THE VERANDA, WHICH ABUTS THE SOUTH END OF THE EAST ELEVATION, BEYOND THE LATERAL STACK, WITH 2M SCALE; FROM THE NORTH-NORTH-WEST.



8. W2 IN THE EAST ELEVATION; FROM THE EAST-NORTH-EAST.



9. THE INTERIOR FACE OF THE NORTH GABLE, WITH 2M SCALE; FROM THE SOUTH-WEST.



10. THE INTERIOR FACE OF THE SOUTH GABLE, WITH 2M SCALE; FORM THE NORTH.



11. D2 AND THE FORGE, WITH 2M SCALE; FROM THE SOUTH-WEST.



12. D2 AND THE SOUTH GABLE, WITH 2M SCALE; FROM THE NORTH-WEST.



13. THE FORGE WORKING AREA, WITH 1M SCALE; FORM THE NORTH.



14. THE FORGE WORKING AREA FORM THE WEST, WITH 1M SCALE.





15. THE UNDERSIDE OF THE FORGE STRUCTURE.



16. THE CHIMNEY TO THE FORGE, REBUILT IN BRICK; FROM THE NORTH.



17. THE WINDOW (W2) FROM THE INTERIOR, WITH 2M SCALE; FROM THE SOUTH-WEST.



18. THE WORK BENCH WHICH SERVES THE HATCH (W1); FROM THE NORTH-EAST.



19. THE LATERAL STACK, WITH 2M SCALE; FROM THE SOUTH, SHOWING THE SLOPING PROFILE OF THE SURVIVING THATCHED ROOF.



20. THE VERANDA AND EXPOSED COB WALL WITHIN, WITH 2M SCALE (D2) AND (D5); FROM THE NORTH-EAST.



21. THE BOARDED AND CORRUGATED STRUCTURE WHICH FORMS R1B, WITH 2M SCALE; FROM THE NORTH-EAST.



22. THE BOARDED AND CORRUGATED STRUCTURE WHICH FORMS R1B, WITH 2M SCALE; FROM THE WEST.



23. THE SOUTH GABLE AND SOUTH END OF THE WEST WALL, WITH 2M SCALE; FROM THE SOUTH-EAST.



24. THE SOUTH END OF THE WEST WALL, WITH 2M SCALE; FORM THE EAST.



25. ROOFLINE SCAR OF FORMER OUTSHUT TO COB GABLE WITHIN R1B; FROM THE SOUTH-EAST.



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