

BARNS AT HARESTON FARM, BRIXTON, DEVON

SX 5661 5377

Heritage Statement

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On behalf of:
Dart Developments (Devon) Ltd

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AC archaeology

1. INTRODUCTION (Fig. 1)

- 1.1** This heritage statement has been prepared by AC archaeology on behalf of Dart Developments (Devon) Ltd for a group of agricultural buildings at Hareston Farm, Brixton, Devon. The farm is located at SX 5661 5377 situated roughly equidistant between Ivybridge and Yealmpton and Brixton (Fig. 1) at a height of 50m aOD. The underlying geology comprises Middle Devonian slate with some basalt in the immediate vicinity (British Geological Survey 2015).
- 1.2** The buildings form a distinctive and contemporary part of a farm complex, with other agricultural buildings situated to the east and west – these are both earlier and later in origin. The farmhouse is located to the east of the farm complex and is modern (i.e. 20th century) and almost certainly contemporary with the farm buildings discussed within this document. The character of the farm buildings is described further in section 4.4 below. The buildings are situated in a valley with the land sloping down to the southeast.

2. AIMS

- 2.1** The principal aim of the document as to evaluate the historic buildings to allow a full consideration of the historic fabric, and to assess their significance, which can be used to determine proposals for their redevelopment.

3. METHODOLOGY

- 3.1** The heritage statement has been prepared in accordance with the South Hams District Council and West Devon Borough Council joint document *Local Validation List: Guidance about the information required to achieve a valid application*. Reference has also been made to the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists *Standard and Guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures* (revised 2014), and the Historic England document *Understanding Historic Buildings: A guide to good recording practice*. Where appropriate methodologies outlined within these documents have been used.
- 3.2** A rapid desk-based appraisal, comprising an assessment of the relevant historic maps, and data held at the Devon County Historic Environment Record (HER), was carried out.
- 3.3** A site visit was also undertaken, which comprised:
- The preparation of a written description of the buildings and their local context in relation to the complex;
 - An annotated plan of the buildings, to show builds of different date and architectural fittings and features; and
 - A basic photographic record including the overall character of the buildings, as well as detailed views of any architectural features and fixtures and fittings as necessary to illustrate the report.

4. DOCUMENTARY BACKGROUND (Fig. 2)

- 4.1** Brixton is a rural parish on the south side of Dartmoor. Hoskins (1954, 351) noted the 15th-century church of St Mary, and also mentions Hareston as one of eight medieval estates recorded in the Domesday Book.
- 4.2** The complex of farm buildings discussed here are first depicted on the 2nd revision of the 25-inch Ordnance Survey map dated 1913. The distinctive E-shaped plan is present with the shorter southwest wing. Interestingly the northeast wing is shown as an attached but distinct building with the northeast elevation marked with a dashed line to show that it was open-fronted along the entire northeast length.
- 4.3** This new build replaces the majority of the buildings that had previously occupied the site (Devon Historic Environment Record MDV74377); only one building, the stables, appears to have survived the demolition and this is situated to the north of Building B and east of Building A (HER MDV74376). The site may have been occupied for several centuries and is probably the location of one of two manors named *Harestana* in the Domesday Book (MDV19544). The 'Lower' element to the former placename is typical of early settlements, where the general placename is used for house in two nearby locations. In the local area these also include East and West Sherford and East and West Pitten. Other buildings, since demolished, are recorded on the Brixton Tithe Map of 1839 (MDVs 65587, 65589, 65590). The current farmhouse is also a new build, probably constructed at the same time as the other early 20th-century farm buildings, and is located on a previously unoccupied site to the east of the historic farm.

5. THE BUILDINGS (Fig. 3; Plates 1-15)

5.1 Building A

This is the major building on the site and consists of a range facing northwest with wings to the rear forming an overall E-shape plan. The majority of the building is constructed of roughly coursed masonry, predominantly limestone, but other stones are present. The architectural features are chiefly outlined in brick, with some granite features, and later renovation in cement and steel. All of the buildings reported here currently lie derelict. The buildings described were formed by an early 20th century redevelopment of an earlier farm site to create a 'model farm'.

5.2 The exterior elevations

There are four louvred box vents located on the roofs of the northwest range, the pair of buildings behind the range and on the most southwesterly wing.

The northwest elevation has been modified by the demolition of a projecting bay. This may have been an engine house as it does not have any obvious access to the remainder of the building, excepting a small rectangular aperture, which indicates that the demolished area would have been accessed externally. The wall stubs of this former projection had been keyed into the main building indicating that it formed part of the original build.

The northwest elevation has ten openings at first-floor level (Plate 1); seven are windows and three are double doors beneath dormers. The windows and doors all have wooden frames. The roof is slated. The land slopes down to the southwest along this elevation. At ground level are 10 openings. The four to the northeast are for hatches with double doors; the remainder appear to be for windows.

The northeast elevation has a corrugated metal lean-to garage against the northwest range (Plate 2). Beside this, to the northeast is an open-fronted structure, supported on the northeast side on three cast-iron pillars. This has a mud floor and slate roof. At its southeast end one bay of the barn has been infilled by a modern concrete block construction creating extra internal space (Rooms 2 and 4, see below). The external concrete block wall has a window and door (for Room 2) with a skylight inserted above.

The southeast elevation incorporates the three gable ends of the wings (Plate 3). The most easterly gable end is single storey and has two steel sliding doors, a clerestory window above one of these, an off-centre slit vent and a pair of windows, the most easterly with wooden louver shutters and the westerly is part-blocked to approximately half of its original height. The central gable is the most interesting and is two storeys tall (Plates 4 and 5). It has two large, modern, openings at ground floor level. At first storey level there is a pair of low arched windows, infilled with breeze blocks, and two cross slit vents above which is a centrally located rectangular arched vent. Between the cross slit vents are two plaques. The largest, in cement, reads "THE PLYMOUTH/ CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY LTD/ ERECTED 1908". Beneath this is a smaller plaque, possibly in marble, which reads "There is nothing/ permanent [?- here even]/ the woods bide/ but their time". The gable end of westerly wing is single story, and of modern concrete block construction with a single large opening.

Formed by the wings are two foldyards (labelled 1 and 2) which give access to the sides of the wings and to two northeast-southwest oriented buildings located behind the main northwest range.

Foldyard 1 has doors providing access to four rooms (originally five, see below) at ground level (Plate 6). Each of these rooms is provided with windows. Only the central wing has an upper floor visible from this foldyard and is provided with six windows and two doors matching the positions of those below them. Many of the upper windows have been blocked and the roof of this wing has been replaced with corrugated sheeting. Here, and elsewhere, an original feature is the provision of granite threshold stones for the upper doors. Granite is also used for external doors at ground level to provide the mortice block for sliding latches. A distinctive architectural feature that is present throughout the old build to the rear of the northwest range is particularly apparent in Foldyard 1 is the provision of clay pipe venting at eaves level (or beam level in the case of the central wing). This is a feature of some 19th- and 20th-century Westcountry agricultural buildings.

Foldyard 2 is arranged similarly to Foldyard 1, but because of a modern extension to the single storey southwesterly wing, does not retain the same original qualities. The extension is roofed with corrugated sheeting.

The southwest elevation reveals two builds (Plate 7). An extension towards the gable end is constructed of concrete blocks, and beyond is the original build, including the southwest end of the northwest range with many modifications to the original openings.

5.3 The interior

The interior is currently divided into 14 rooms (see Fig. 3) and are described individually below.

Room 1 is the open-fronted barn which opens to the northeast. The ceiling is open to the roof which is supported by a half A-frame structure in three bays. Originally,

this would have been four bays, but one bay has been removed by modern alterations as described above, but which has also created a small loft space (above Room 4, see below). The northwest and southwest walls are stone. In the southwest wall at a high level (equivalent to an upper storey) are four brick-arched hatches with wooden doors.

Room 2 is part of the modern build taken out of Room 1. It is entered externally from a wooden latch door and has single steel-framed window looking to the northeast. This appears to have been a small office or cloakroom.

Room 3 is a room belonging to the original build and would have formed the enclosed southeast end of the open-fronted barn. Two original access points are from the gable end to the southeast and a now blocked door to a corridor on its southeast side. A modern opening through the northwest wall provides access to the new Room 4. A pair of original slit vents are located high up on the northwest wall. The walls are covered in modern cement render and the room has a concrete floor; it appears to have been in use as a workshop when abandoned.

Room 4 is part of the new build taken out of Room 1. It is cement rendered with a concrete floor. The ceiling is to roof height on the northeast end where there is an aperture for a roof light. The southwest end is lower where there is a loft above accessed from the open-fronted barn. A (bBlocked) modern door in the northwest corner formerly provided access to Room 7, although in recent times the niche has been converted for shelving. As with Room 3 this room appears to have been recently used as a workshop.

Room 5 is a small cattle byre with room and accoutrements for a pair of cows. There are two access points with a large door entering from Foldyard 1 and opposite a small door entering from a corridor. A large, part-blocked, window faces southeast. The floor is paved with modern ceramic tiles.

Room 6 is a small cattle byre matching Room 5, but the window is adjacent to the door facing on to Foldyard 1.

Room 7 is an L-shaped former milking parlour with cement and steel troughs (Plate 8). The current configuration has been achieved by the removal of a northwest-southeast aligned wall and its replacement with a steel joist. The total area comprises eight bays with half A-frames sharing the opposite pitch of the roof with the open-fronted room (1) to the northeast and two A-frame structures in the southwest part of the room. The four hatches noted in the room 1 are revealed high up in the northeast wall; the ceiling is formed by the roof and there is no evidence that a loft was once positioned above this area making the location of the hatches difficult to explain. A pair of brick-arched doors provide access from Foldyard 1 and four windows face onto the foldyard. There are access points via a corridor in the southeast and through a pair of brick-arched doors to Room 11 in the southwest. There were formerly two doors in the northwest wall providing a link with Room 8, with the northeasterly completely and the southwesterly partly blocked up.

Room 8 is a large room at the northeastern end of the northwest range (Plate 9). It formerly had a full first floor but this has been removed, leaving the beam slots visible, although blocked. A small part of this floor has been left as a mezzanine/balcony at the southwest end of the room with the reminder open to the roof revealing three cross-braced frame structures. The northwest wall contains two brick-arched windows and two doors with dormers above at the level of the first floor. One door matched the surviving portion of upper floor. At ground-floor level

are four hatches, the bases of which are at the level of the ground externally, but are significantly above floor level internally. These are all provided with steel and cement lintels and double wooden doors. The northeast wall is provided with two large centrally placed rectangular windows above which is a small rectangular louvred vent within the gable. Formerly there were two doors to Room 7 and a pair of doors linking with Room 9 below and an upper room above within the northwest range. This southwestern wall is brick-built in English bond, as are the other two dividing walls in the northwest range.

Room 9 is centrally positioned in the northwest range. This appears to have been a fodder preparation room with a wooden chute from the floor above, and access to that floor through a hatch from a wooden ladder attached to the northwest wall. A metal chute is attached to the southeast wall. Access to the central wing (Room 11) is through a large brick-arched doorway centrally placed in the southeast wall, with double wooden doors, providing direct access to central feeding passage between a pair of troughs in the central wing (Room 11, see below). The ceiling is supported by steel pillars as are the floor boards and beams of the upper storey. The beams are cross-braced at regular intervals and this appears to be an original feature noted in all of the original rooms where an upper floor is present (rooms 9, 10, 11 and 14).

Room 10 is a small room with modern steel girders supporting the ceiling. It is entered through a brick-arched door from Room 9 and a former door, which is modern, with a cement lintel that is now part-blocked but would have connected with Room 14. The northwest wall originally had a window which is currently infilled by concrete blocks and corrugated metal sheets.

Room 11 is formed by the central wing and was formerly a large cattle byre (Plate 10). It has two cement and steel troughs, with a narrow feeding passage in between, placed longitudinally along the length of the building. Access externally is through both foldyards and the southeast gable end. There is also a pair of doors each side connecting to rooms 7 and 12 and the large centrally placed door to Room 9. The feeding passage between the troughs allowed the dairy hand to fill the troughs with fodder, either from Room 9 or through a pair of hatches over the feeding passage in the ceiling above. The ceiling appears to retain the beams and cross-braces of the original build, but the floorboards are modern replacements.

Room 12 is a small cattle byre with a cement and steel trough dividing the room from a corridor/feeding passage in the northwest (Plate 11). The size and layout of this room would have originally mirrored that of the southwest part of Room 7 before that was knocked through to make a larger milking parlour. The ceiling is formed by the roof with two wooden A-frame structures. A pair of brick-arched doors in the northeast wall gives access to Room 11, and there may have been the same in the southwest wall although the southernmost of these is now a window (of original type). The southeast wall has a centrally placed door giving access to Foldyard 2 and windows either side.

Room 13 forms the southwest wing and was a large cattle byre with a cement and steel trough along the length of one side (Plate 12). This room has been extended using concrete blocks and a corrugated sheet roof supported on steel trusses; it is slightly wider than the original build. The 2nd edition revised 25-inch Ordnance Survey map shows this area was a walled yard prior to the extension. The northeast wall of the original build has a door and two windows opening on to Foldyard 2. The southwest wall has five windows and a blocked door. There is a blocked window in the northwest wall and a brick-arched door providing access to Room 14, along with

a further modern door to the northeast, also giving access to Room 14, had been blocked.

Room 14 is a small plain room at the southwest end of the northwest range. It has two windows in the northwest wall and one in the southwest which is blocked. Access is from Room 13 only. A former door to Room 10 is now part-blocked and appears to be a modern insertion with a concrete lintel.

The upper floor was difficult of access during the field visit, but a cursory inspection was made. The rooms above rooms 9, 10 and 14 appear to retain their original features including brick-arched doors, roof structure and floor boards. The ladder in Room 9 continues into the first-floor room above. Each of the rooms have original openings to the northwest. The loft in the central wing above Room 11 has seen significant modification with the roof structure and floor boards replaced. The double doors on the northeast side appear to be original while those on the southwest side do not.

5.4 Building B (Plate 14)

This is located to the southeast of Building A. It is constructed using the same materials and in the same style as Building A and has a pitched slate roof with a brick chimney stack on the northeast end of the ridge which is topped by a tall yellow ceramic chimney pot. It comprises one large double height room with a clerestory window in the southwest gable and a large door and window in the northwest wall. The ceiling is open to the roof with two wooden A-frame structures exposed. This room may have been used as a garage, although the chimney along with an ash hatch, an adjacent blocked opening and pipe in the southeast corner may indicate that a boiler or free-standing hearth had been located in this area. To the southeast are two adjoining contemporary small rooms with a different ridge line that is lower in height. Each of these has a door facing northwest. The room in the middle has a large brick-built pedestal at the rear holding a concrete shelf. The functions of these small rooms are unclear.

5.5 Building C (Plate 15)

This is located to the southeast of Building A, and is narrow and long on a northwest-southeast alignment. It is constructed of the same materials and in the same style as buildings A and B and has a pitched slate roof. It comprises two rooms; a small room at the southeast end accessed externally by a southwest facing door and the remainder divided by pens internally and formerly accessed by seven (one now blocked) small doors in the southwest wall opening from external pens. The pair of external pens matching the northwest end appear to have their original stone walls, but the pair southeast of these have been replaced in concrete and steel; these are matched internally by pens constructed with modern materials. This building was undoubtedly constructed as a piggery with a feed preparation area at the southeast end. Oddly, the only window is at the northwest end.

6. DEVELOPMENT AND USE OF THE BUILDINGS

6.1 The main architectural interest is in the early 20th-century new build of a model farm. This is a late example of purpose-built dairy farm of this type, which was functional, rather than being finished with architectural embellishments as used in the earlier examples. All but one – the stables – of the earlier farm buildings, including the house were replaced, and the fields surrounding the farm enlarged to former larger parcels of grazing land. The northwest range appears to predominantly have been for the delivery, storage and preparation of feed, with the

central and southwest wings, and the rooms between the wings and part of the northeast wing used for the sheltering of the cows. The feed was delivered via Room 9 or from the loft above Room 11. The remainder of the northeast wing appears to have been used for workshops and the storage of machinery and/or carts.

- 6.2 The distinctive features of the architecture are externally the bare stone walls with brick and occasional granite dressings, the ridge line louvre vent boxes and slate roofs where they survive. Much of the arrangement of windows and vents relates to late 19th-century legislation and some of this was superseded in the 1920s by further legislation, meaning that Hareston represents a particular period in farm management.
- 6.3 Internally there has been some modification of the original buildings, but the floor beams where they survive (over rooms 9, 10, 11 and 14), roof structures (part from over Room 11) and brick-arched openings are distinctive. Modern additions, the extension to Room 13 and the inserted rooms 2 and 4, could be removed without detriment to the understanding of the original building. It is unfortunate that the probable engine house has already been lost.
- 6.4 There are few fixtures and fittings that can with confidence be dated to the original build. Several wooden hatch, shutter, loft and internal doors are of probable early date. The loft ladder and chute in Room 9 are distinctive of the animal feed preparation function of this room.
- 6.5 The buildings appear to have undergone little change until the second half of the 20th century. The main buildings appear to have been extended either to cope with a larger herd or to accommodate the needs of modern farming practices. In this period the southwest wing was extended, two separate rooms were knocked together to make the milking parlour (Room 7) and large doors (possibly replacing earlier smaller doors) were made in the gable end of the central wing. At a later date still the engine house was removed and the upper floor removed from the northeast end of the northwest range. The corrugated metal lean-to on the northeast corner is also an addition to the original design, but is of unknown date.

7. ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

- 7.1 Guidance on the assessment of significance is set out in Historic England's *Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment*, *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: 2* (2015), as well as the earlier English Heritage guidance '*Conservation Principles – Policies and guidance for the sustainable management of the historic environment*'. This guidance states that heritage assets are considered to have significance based on their evidential, historical, aesthetic or communal value. The *National Planning Policy Framework* also includes the criteria of architectural and artistic value.

7.2 Evidential and architectural values

Evidential value derives from the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity, and includes both architectural and archaeological evidence.

There are no Historic Environment Record entries which relate to below-ground archaeological investigations or find spots relating directly to the site. However, the potential early history of the site is noted, and therefore Hareston may contain below-ground archaeological remains associated with earlier farming and/or

settlement activity. That said, it is clear that the farm was subject to intensive landscaping in 1908 when the current buildings were constructed, and it is unlikely that buried archaeological remains will survive below or adjacent to the early 20th-century buildings.

The buildings provide evidence of past farming activity, including both historic use and more recent adaptations. Model farms are rare in Devon, and on this basis the buildings have architectural interest. However, due to this late date they are of limited architectural quality, with the emphasis on function rather than display. The design, with buildings set around two foldyards, reflects over 100 years of development of architectural buildings on model farms, in particular the layouts that evolved in the mid 19th century (Wade Martins 2010, 112-169), and therefore do not display the 'cutting edge' of agricultural architectural design and theory.

From this evidence, overall it can be concluded that the buildings have medium evidential value (based on their architectural value), and therefore this forms a large part of their significance.

7.3 Historical Value

Historical value derives from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present. It tends to be illustrative or associative.

The buildings form the latest in a series of agricultural buildings on the site. Their late date, for a model farm, has been noted, and this can be attributed to two factors. Firstly, the main use as a dairy farm, and secondly their construction by an organisation rather than by a large private landowner. The current farm was constructed by the Plymouth Co-Operative Society, and as far as can be determined, Hareston was one of a number of the Society's farms within and around the city. This period nationally marked a low point in the construction of model farms, with the end of the landowner-financed agricultural improvement, but with a short-lived era of construction by food-producing companies (*ibid.*, 193-197).

It can be therefore concluded that the buildings have medium historical value, but due to the lack of direct historical documentation this is considered to form a small part of the building's significance.

7.4 Aesthetic value

Aesthetic value derives from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place.

Although as noted above the buildings have limited architectural quality, their character, in particular the use of stone with brick dressings, is in part vernacular reflecting later 19th and 20th architectural styles for agricultural buildings in this part of the Westcountry, and they are not unattractive. The aesthetic appeal has to an extent been diminished by the modern extensions although these are reversible.

From this evidence it can be concluded that the buildings have low aesthetic value, and therefore this forms a small part of the building's significance.

7.5 Communal Value

Communal value derives from the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory. Communal values are closely bound up with historical (particularly associative) and aesthetic values, but tend to have additional and specific aspects.

The buildings may be considered to have communal value as they form part of a farm complex in a former agricultural community. However, this value has to an extent been lost by the closure of the farm.

From this evidence it can be concluded that the buildings have low communal value, and therefore this forms a very small part of the building's significance.

7.6 Setting

Setting is defined as the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced.

At Hareston the setting comprises the former farm and the surrounding land from which the buildings can be viewed. The importance of the setting is the relationship of the buildings to each other, including the farmhouse, as a planned group of contemporary agricultural structures, along with their contemporary agricultural landscape.

This setting therefore forms part of the buildings' significance, although it is considered to be of lower importance than evidential value.

7.7 Assessment of value

In summary, it is considered that the significance of the barns is drawn mainly from their evidential (in particular their architectural) value. They have a lesser historical, aesthetic and communal values. Setting also parts of their significance.

The evidential value has the potential to contribute to two of the research aims set out in the *South West Archaeological Research Framework* (Webster 2007):

Research Aim 8: Utilise the survival of Medieval and later artefacts and buildings to their full extent.

Research Aim 15: Use innovative techniques and methodologies to ask sophisticated questions of Post-Medieval to Modern artefacts and buildings.

8. SOURCES CONSULTED

Devon Heritage Centre

1839 Brixton tithe map and 1840 apportionment

Ordnance Survey 25-inch 2nd edition Devonshire map sheet revision, CXXXIV.12, surveyed 1862, revised 1912, published 1913

Printed Sources

Hoskins, W.G., 1954, *Devon* (Collins)

Wade Martins, S., 2002, *The English Model Farm: Building the Agricultural Ideal, 1700-1914* (Windgather: Oxford)

Webster, C.J., 2007, *The Archaeology of South West England, South West Archaeological Research Framework Resource Assessment and Research Agenda* (Somerset County Council)

Websites (accessed September 2015)

British Geological Survey on-line viewer, www.bgs.ac.uk

Heritage Gateway, (<http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/gateway/>)



PROJECT
Barns at Hareston,
Brixton, Devon

TITLE
Fig. 1: Site location



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0 1km

Scale 1:20,000@A4



PROJECT

Barns at Hareston,
Brixton, Devon

TITLE

Fig. 2: Extract from the
1839 Brixton Tithe map



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Building A

Demolished



⑧

⑦

①

⑨

⑩

⑫

⑬

⑭

Foldyard 1

⑪

Foldyard 2

②

④

⑥

⑤

③

Stables

Building C

Farmhouse

Building B

Modern barn

- 1908 farm buildings
- Later 20th Century

0 25m
Scale 1:500@A4

PROJECT
Barns at Hareston, Brixton, Devon

TITLE
Fig. 4: Plan of the farm buildings, showing room numbers and phasing of fabric





Plate 1: The farm complex, viewed from the northwest.



Plate 2: The northeast elevation, viewed from the north.



Plate 3: The southeast elevation, viewed from the south.



Plate 4: The southeast elevation of the central wing.



Plate 5: Central wing plaques, detail.



Plate 6: Foldyard 1, viewed from the northeast.



Plate 7: The southwest wing, viewed from the south.



Plate 8: Building A, Room 7, viewed from the northwest.



Plate 9: Building A, Room 8, viewed from the mezzanine, looking northeast.



Plate 10: Building A, Room 11, looking northwest.



Plate 11: Building A, Room 12, looking west.



Plate 12: Building A, Room 13, looking northwest.



Plate 13: Building A, loft above Room 11, looking southeast.



Plate 14: Building B, viewed from the north.



Plate 15: Building C, viewed from the northwest.

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