

JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

**BUILDING ASSESSMENT**  
**ON**  
**FRIZERS FARMHOUSE,**  
**SONNING EYE, OXFORDSHIRE**  
**NGR SU 75235 75966**

*On behalf of*  
*Richard Marriott*

**JANUARY 2016**

**REPORT FOR** Mr R Marriott  
Frizers Farmhouse  
Sonning Eye  
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## Frizers Farmhouse

### *Building Assessment*

#### SUMMARY

*A building assessment was requested of the grade II listed building Frizers Farmhouse, Sonning Eye, Eye and Dunsden, Oxfordshire (NGR SU 75235 75966). The hamlet of Sonning Eye was historically located in the parish of Sonning, predominantly located in Berkshire. However, a historic part of the parish was located on the north side of the Thames and lay in the historic Hundred of Binfield and the historic County of Oxfordshire. The name Sonning Eye refers to an island located in the braided course of the river.*

*The building is a designated structure being a grade II listed building. The development of the building is a complicated affair. The earliest part of the building has to include the northeast range of the building. This part of the building has a lower structure and less of a height with its head space; besides which there is the attic space evidence that the roof structure of the other two storey part of the building extends over the roof structure of the northeast range. The date that this range was believed to be built is at least 17<sup>th</sup> century but could be 16<sup>th</sup> century.*

*The exact development of the next part of the building is more complicated, and here it is assumed that all of the rest of the two storey part of the building was all part of one phase, although this is probably not the case but at present it is not possible to work out how it went together. The rest of the two storey part of the building contained a range orientated northeast to southwest and a further one from northwest to southeast. It is apparent that the roof extends over the northeast range, and that there is a truss with a possible box frame to the southwest of the central chimney. It is also the case that on the maps there is a southwest range orientated northwest to southeast. There is a jowl post that survives in the northeast wall that is a physical survival of this range. It is assumed at present that this is more likely to be of a 17<sup>th</sup> century date, but could be of an early 18<sup>th</sup> century date.*

*Map and physical evidence suggest that there were some later additions, which included an addition on the southwest side and also the one and a half storey part of the building. This has been classed as phase 3, and is either late 17<sup>th</sup> century or early 18<sup>th</sup> century.*

*The last phase of a positive development saw the addition of a single storey structure at the west corner of the current building. This addition can be recognised as a development and dated from representation on maps. The map of 1841 does not show it, but it is apparent that the area has been infilled by 1845.*

*The last phase of the building is apparent also from map evidence. The map of 1845 appears to still show the southeast wing extending, but this feature appears to have been removed by the first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1876. This indicates that the southeast and southwest elevations were reworked in the third*

*quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.*

*The current proposal is to replace the outbuilding with an extension to the house.*

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## **1 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Location**

Frizers Farmhouse (Frizers Farm House on listing) is located in the parish of Eye and Dunsden, Oxfordshire (NGR SU 75235 75966). Historically this parish was a liberty of the parish of the mother church of Sonning, just across the River Thames in Historic Berkshire. However, Eye and Dunsden were historically in Binfield Hundred and in the Historic County of Oxfordshire. The current parish is located in South Oxfordshire District.

Topographically Sonning Eye occupies part of the Thames flood plain, being located on a slightly raised area which helped as a bridging point across that river. The River Thames is braided here with the main course to the southeast of Sonning Eye and the Berry Brook to the north and west. The Ordnance Datum height is about 36m.

The underlying geology is Seaford Chalk Formation and Newhaven Chalk Formation (undifferentiated) that was laid down some 71 to 89 million years ago in the Cretaceous Period ([mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html](http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html)). A superficial deposit overlying this is the Langley Silt Member, a clay and silt deposit laid down some 2 million years ago in the Quaternary. To the south there are Alluvium deposits a clay, silt sand and gravel mix laid down from 2 million years ago.

### **1.2 Commission**

The report was commissioned by Richard Marriott of Frizers Farmhouse after a consultation with the South Oxfordshire District Conservation Officer Sally Stradling.

### **1.3 Aim of Investigation**

The aim of the investigation is to produce a report that would provide advice on the development and design of the building. The proposal is to replace the proposal is to replace the outbuilding with an extension to the house. The subsequent report will be used to advise the Conservation Officer, Client and Architect where the best location would be to insert an access into the current building.

### **1.4 Planning Guidelines and Policies**

The National Planning Policy Framework (2012) provides guidance related to heritage assets within the planning process. The following Policy points are key to this development:

128. In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes or has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate heritage impact assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.

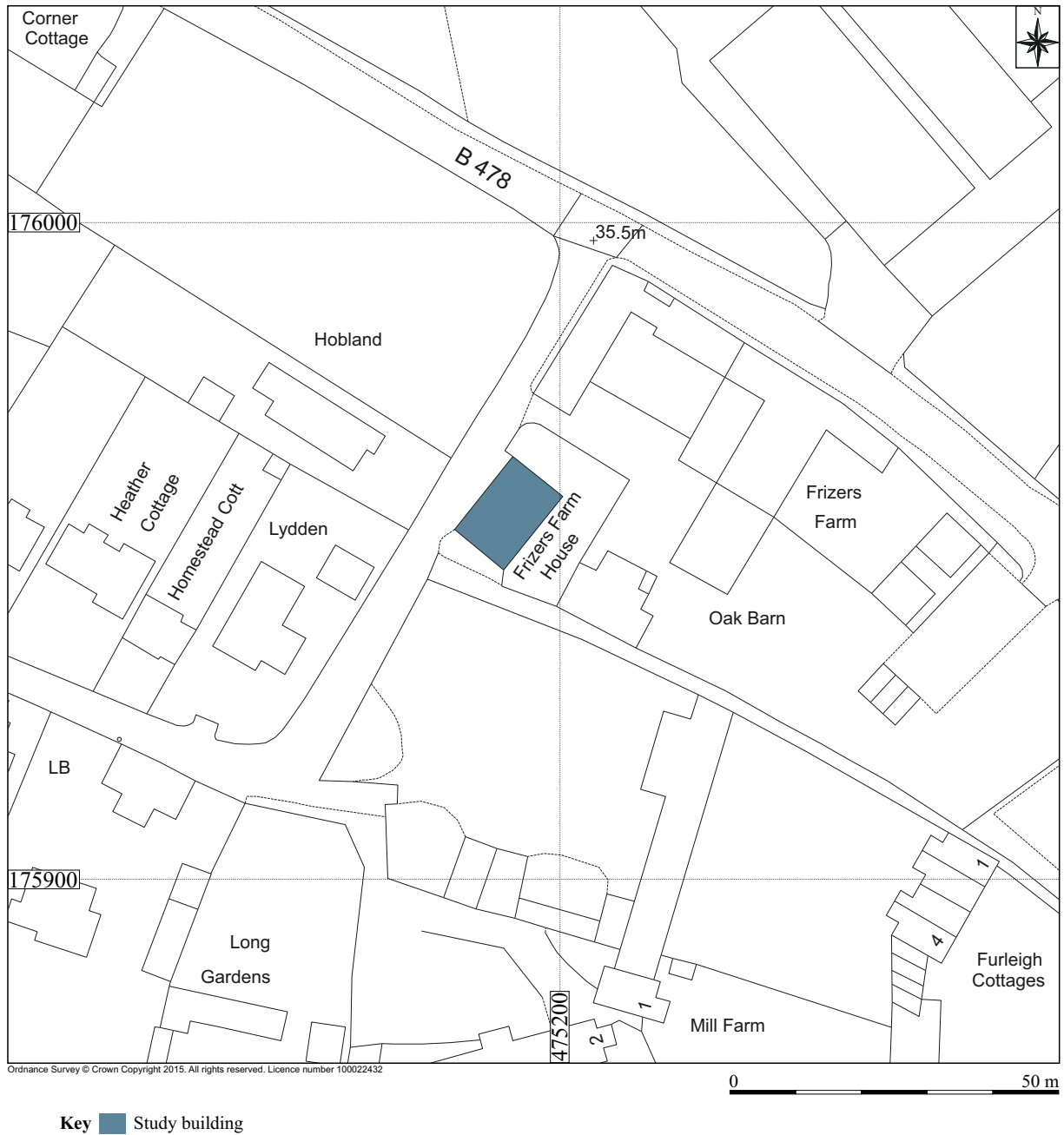


Figure 1: Site location



129. Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this assessment into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

The NPPF also makes provisions for the protecting significance of non-designated heritage assets (**135**), the setting of heritage assets (**137**) and stresses the desirability of the proposed development to make a positive contribution to the local character and distinctiveness (**131**).

The South East Plan was revoked on 25 March 2013 under the Regional Strategy for the South East (Partial Revocation) Order 2013. The revocation of the South East Plan decentralises planning powers to local authorities. However, local authorities have a duty to co-operate with other bodies to ensure that strategic priorities across local boundaries are properly co-ordinated and reflected in local plans.

The NPPF makes provisions for the continued use of the Local Plan for decision making in the district (sections **58** and **126**). Due weight may be given to the policies in the Local Plan according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF. The Local Plan will therefore continue to form the basis for determining local planning applications until it is superseded by documents in the Local Development Framework, including a new draft Local Plan. Those points to consider in the local plan that affect listed buildings and conservation areas include LB2 (proposals affecting listed buildings or their settings), LB3 (change of use of listed buildings), CA1 (development in conservation areas) and CA2 (guidelines on development affecting conservation areas).

The advent of the NPPF (2012) has raised wider issues of impact on heritage assets, especially on scheduled monuments and grade I listed buildings, to involve not only physical damage but also visual impacts in a wider heritage or historic landscape. The visual impact assessment has been carried out under the following guideline documents Highways Agency (2007), English Heritage (2011a; 2011b), Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environment Management (2013), and the Landscape Institute (2011).

## **2 BACKGROUND**

### **2.1 Designations**

Frizer's Farm House (Historic England's spelling on the designation) is a nationally designated heritage asset (EHBID: 247084: NGR SU 75235 75966); with the following description.

*Farmhouse. Probably late C17. Red brick; plain tile roof; brick stack. 2-unit plan. 2-storey, 2-window range. Central 6-panel glazed door with lattice porch and flat hood; 3-light casements to all openings except ground floor right sliding sash. Flat brick band between ground and first floor. Internal stack to right. Timber-frame wing to rear. Interior not inspected.*

The description is a legacy one; but the listing indicates that architecturally the building is of national significance.

The Buildings of England series does not include this building (Sherwood and Pevsner 1974, 590).

The VCH for this part of the County of Oxfordshire has not been published.

## **2.2 History of Development**

Sonning Eye forms part of Eye and Dunsden, which is a liberty of Sonning Parish (VCH 1923, 210-225). In 1854 the parish still included Sonning Town, Woodley and Sandford, the Liberty of Earley and the Liberty of Eye and Dunsden. The church at Sonning is first mentioned historically in 1091 when it was an endowment of Salisbury Cathedral. The church at Sonning shows a number of the underlying aspects that would imply that it was a minster church of the 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> century. However, there is speculation that the church was an earlier site of a bishopric. This at present is unconfirmed and if correct would have to have been a short lived establishment.

The Berkshire part of Sonning is recorded as being 60 hides in 1066 (Morgan 1979, 3.1), but only 24 hides in 1086. It is apparent that Sonning Eye was probably recorded in the larger Sonning estate of 1066, which reduces in size. Sonning Eye does not appear as a separate estate in the Domesday Book, but Dunsden does. The estate in 1066 and 1086 is recorded as an estate held by the Bishop of Salisbury (Morris 1978, 4.1) and covering an area of 20 hides. The estate contained 40 villagers, 18 smallholders, had 50 acres of meadow, an extensive area of woodland covering 1 league and 4 furlongs and being ½ league wide. It is undoubtedly the case, due to the extensive nature of the village and hidage, that Sonning Eye is included in this estate, and may well have existed as a hamlet at this time. Caversham does not occur in the Oxfordshire Domesday and may also account for the significant number of villagers and extensive woodlands.

The manor of Sonning, which included land at Sonning Eye, was held by the Bishop of Salisbury from 1091 to 1574 (VCH 1923, 210-225). In 1574 the estate of Sonning was exchanged with the queen for a manor nearer Salisbury. The manor at this time was called the Manor of Sonning, Bidell and Eye. In 1610 the manor passed to Henry, Prince of Wales, and on Henry's death in 1616 to Charles, Prince of Wales. Charles I subsequently granted the manor and estate to Laurence Halstead and his father in law Abraham Chamberlain. In 1654 Laurence Halstead and Thomas Chamberlain (son?) conveyed the manor to Thomas Rich. Rich became a baronet in 1660. Daniel Danvers Rich recovered the manor in 1775 and in 1795 the manor was sold by Sir Thomas Rich to Richard Palmer. In 1806 Richard died and the manor subsequently descended through his three children Robert, Richard and Susanna.

The surnames Rich and Palmer can be recognised on maps of the 18<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> century implying that the farm for much of its history formed part of a tenant farm of the manor. The earliest occupiers are the Frizer family, who subsequently gave their name to the property.

## **2.3 Cartographic Research**

The earliest map of the area is by Rocque of 1761-2 (T/M 128) which shows a building in the location of Frizer's Farmhouse that appears to be orientated northwest to southeast

(Fig 2). It is possible that this could mean that only the northeast part of the building existed with its orientation in this direction. Alternatively it could also mean that if the southeast extension was present at this date, due to the detail, Rocque may simply have oversimplified a main central range with two extensions.



Figure 2: Rocque's map of 1761-2

The next map examined was Kitchin's map of *c.*1753 (CH.XXIII/11 b), which indicates the location of Sunning Eye with a church, but does not show any details regarding the village (Fig 3).

The estate map of 1763 (D/EE P1) shows the road system around the farm as the same and the farmhouse in a pictorial form with two windows and a door, but two chimney stacks (Fig 4).

A county map from 1767 (CP/103/M/1), depicts the same as the 1763 map, but shows the building as rectangular structure with no details (Fig 5).

The last map of the 18<sup>th</sup> century to be examined was a map from 1797 (CH.XX/2) which depicts only a row of trees along the edge of the road which the building faces onto, with the only buildings indicated by the map being along the main road leading out of the farm (Fig 6).



Figure 3: Kitchin's map of c.1753



Figure 4: 1763 Estate map



Figure 5: Jefferys's map of 1767

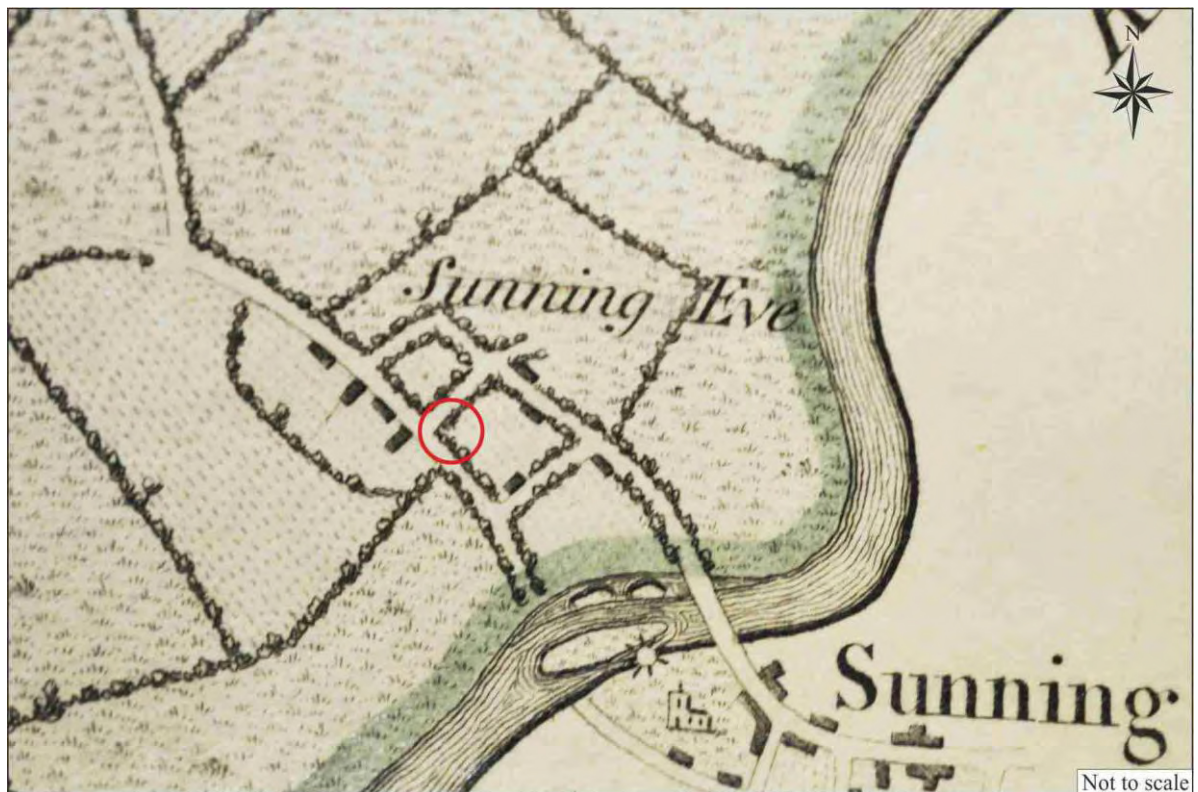


Figure 6: Davis of Lewknor's map of 1797

The Inclosure Map dated 1820 (D/P 113/26 D) shows the two and one and a half storey part of the building as being extant (Fig 7). There are also indications of there being an extension on the southeast side of the building, which is of an unknown form and joins the

barn to the south. Three further buildings are shown around the yard. The plot is numbered 410.

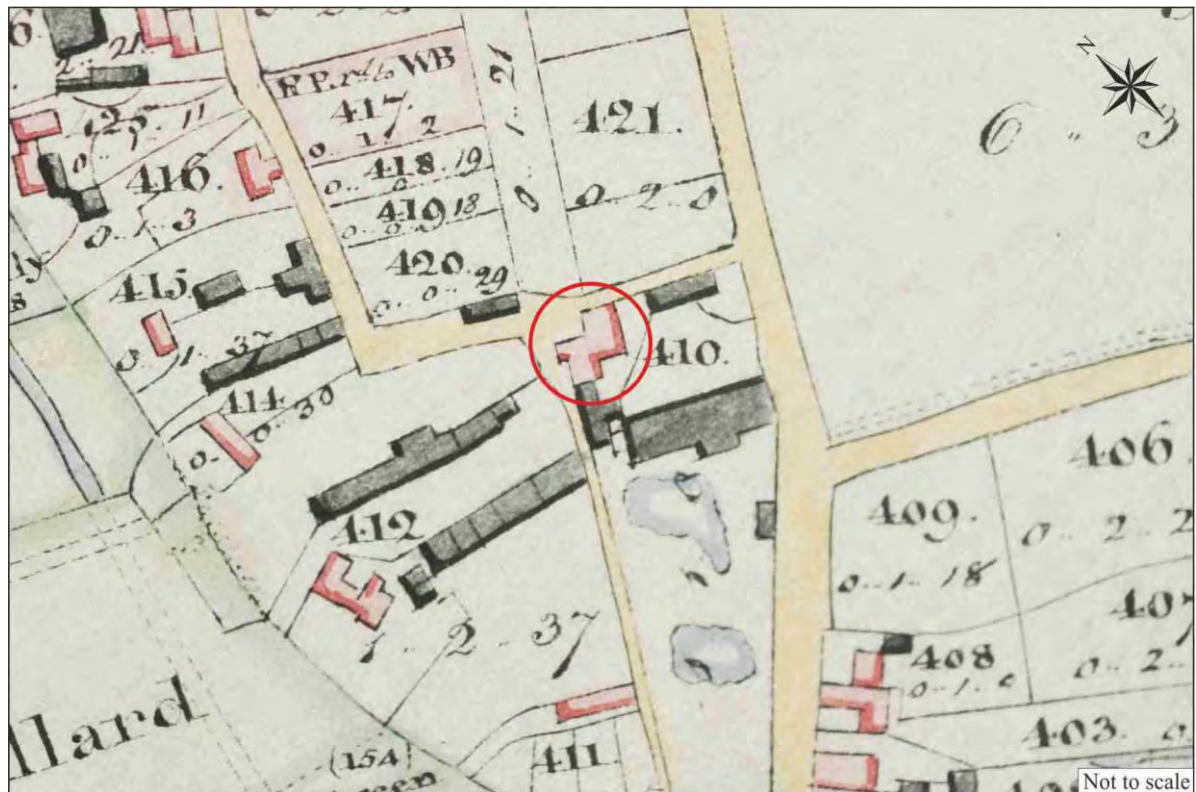


Figure 7: 1820 Inclosure map

A map dated c.1820 (D/EE P4) shows the two storey and one and a half storey part of the building as being constructed. The map also shows a southeast extension from the building that in this case does not join the neighbouring barn (Fig 8). The barn is shown immediately to the south and the large barn on the southeast side of the courtyard. A further agricultural building is shown to the east. The plot is numbered 410 and this map appears to be either an identical replica or a map extremely similar to that of the Inclosure Map. A book (D/EE E11) dated 1825 appears to be a catalogue associated with this map. Plot 410 is reported as being a farm house, barns, stables, outbuildings and a yard. The property owner is noted as Robert Palmer and the occupier as a Thomas Frizer.

A county map from 1824 (P345/M/1) appears to be problematic or erroneous (Fig 9). Buildings are shown in a large sub-square area of roads to the north of Frizers Farm. However, other maps show no or one building here, and it would seem likely that the Frizers Farm complex has been located in the wrong place.

An estate map of 1825 (D/EE P4) shows the structure in a shape that all of the two storey and one and a half storey structure of the building would have been in place (Fig 10). Extending from the southeast side of the structure there is an extension. The barn on the southeast side of the courtyard is shown.



Figure 8: Map from c.1820



Figure 9: Bryant's map of 1824



Figure 10: 1825 Estate map

The Tithe Map of 1841 (D/D1 113 D/1) shows the farmhouse as an irregular shaped structure with all of the two and one and a half storey part of the structure built (Fig 11). There is an extension of the building on the southeast side, extending towards the barn to the south. Between the barn and the farmhouse there is a structure or outbuilding that links both together. The line of the garden wall takes on a completely different form and it is only on the northwest side that the boundary conforms. The plot on the Tithe Map is numbered as 479, while the award notes that plots 460, 461, 471, 472, 479, and 500 are occupied by a Martha Frizer. Martha is presumably a relation of Thomas, either a widow or daughter, or less likely a more distant relation. Due to the way the document is microfiched it is difficult to ascertain who the owner is, but this is invariably a Palmer.

The map of 1845 (D/EE P5) shows the main part of the house as existing (two storey and one and a half storey), it also contains the southeast extension of the structure (which is no longer extant) (Fig 12). This map for the first time shows the northwest corner of the building as being in-filled, which would suggest that this single storey part of the building was constructed at a date from 1841 to 1845.





Figure 11: 1841 Tithe Map



Figure 12: Map from 1845

The First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1879 (Oxon 57.9) shows a rectangular building (Fig 13). This would imply that the southeast wing was removed, demolished or destroyed at a date from 1845 to 1879 or the date at which the later map was surveyed. This

information would imply that the main part of the southeast façade was reworked between these dates, thus implying that the windows (at least on the ground floor) are of this period of alterations. The map also appears to show a porch at the front of the building. It is possible that it is the current porch, but it can also be noted that no side porch is indicated.

An estate map dated at some time from *c.*1897-1916 (D/EX 1544/1/7) shows a building of a rectangular form, which is indicative of the southeast extension being removed and the building being more or less in the current form that it is today (Fig 14). The map is recorded as Mrs Golding Palmer's Estate.

The ordnance survey map of 1899 (Oxon 57.9) shows the building as a rectangular shape, with neither the front nor the rear porch existing (Fig 15). This may imply that neither existed at this time and that an earlier front porch had been removed. The alternative is that these two porches were added around 1879 and that they are simply being omitted from the map. The Third Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1913 (Oxon 57.9) also shows the basic rectangular shape without any porches (Fig 16).

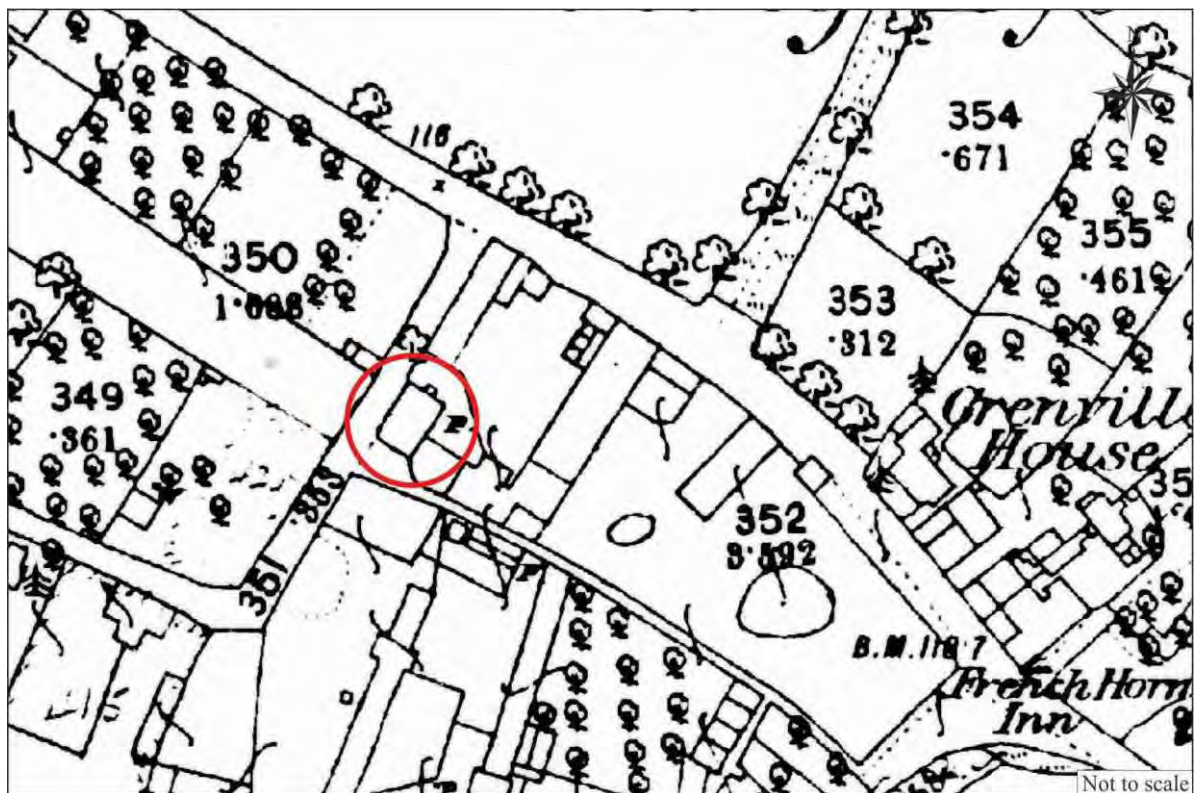


Figure 13: First Edition Ordnance Survey Map 1879

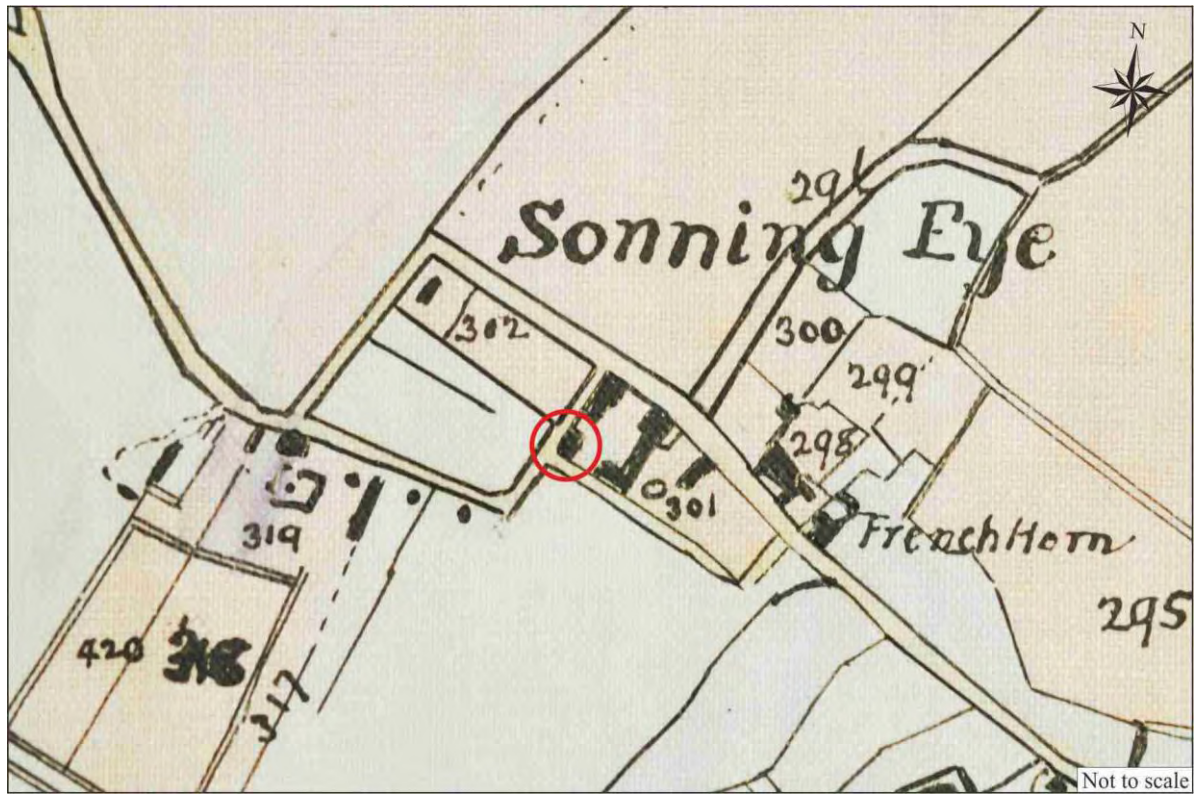


Figure 14: c.1897-1916 Estate map

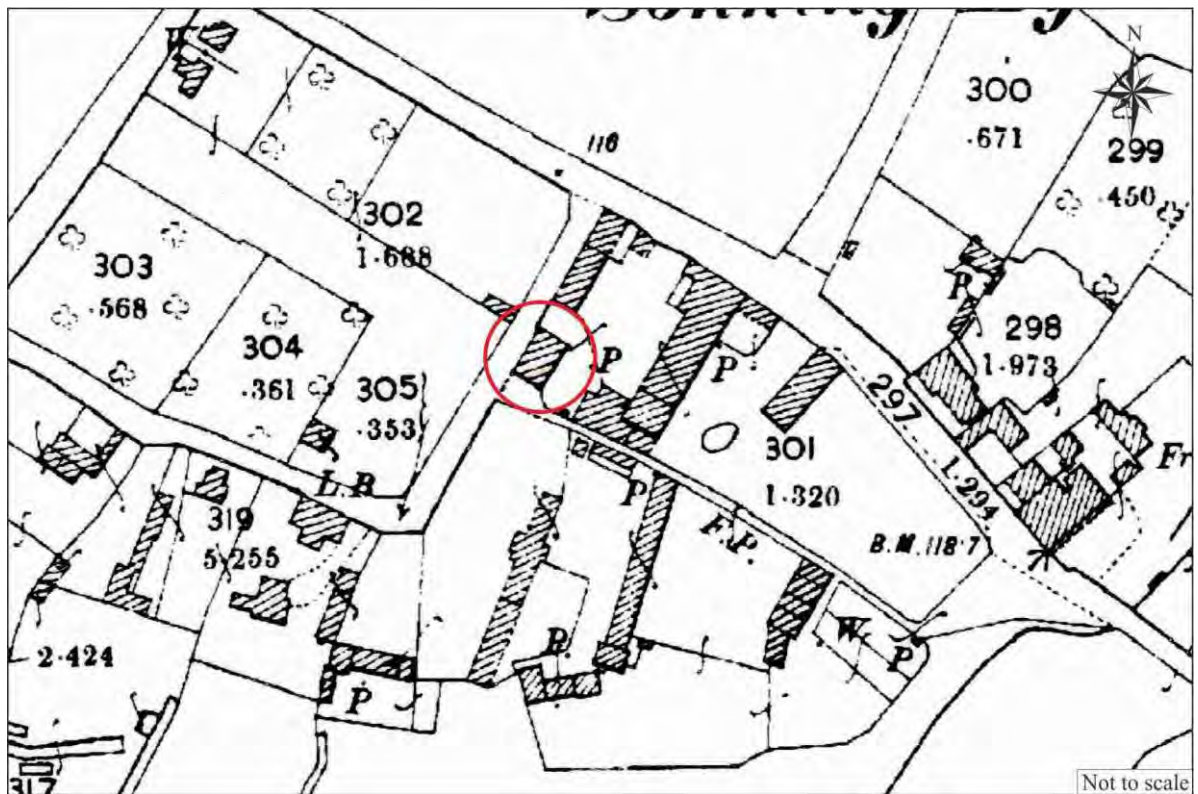


Figure 15: Second Edition Ordnance Survey map 1899

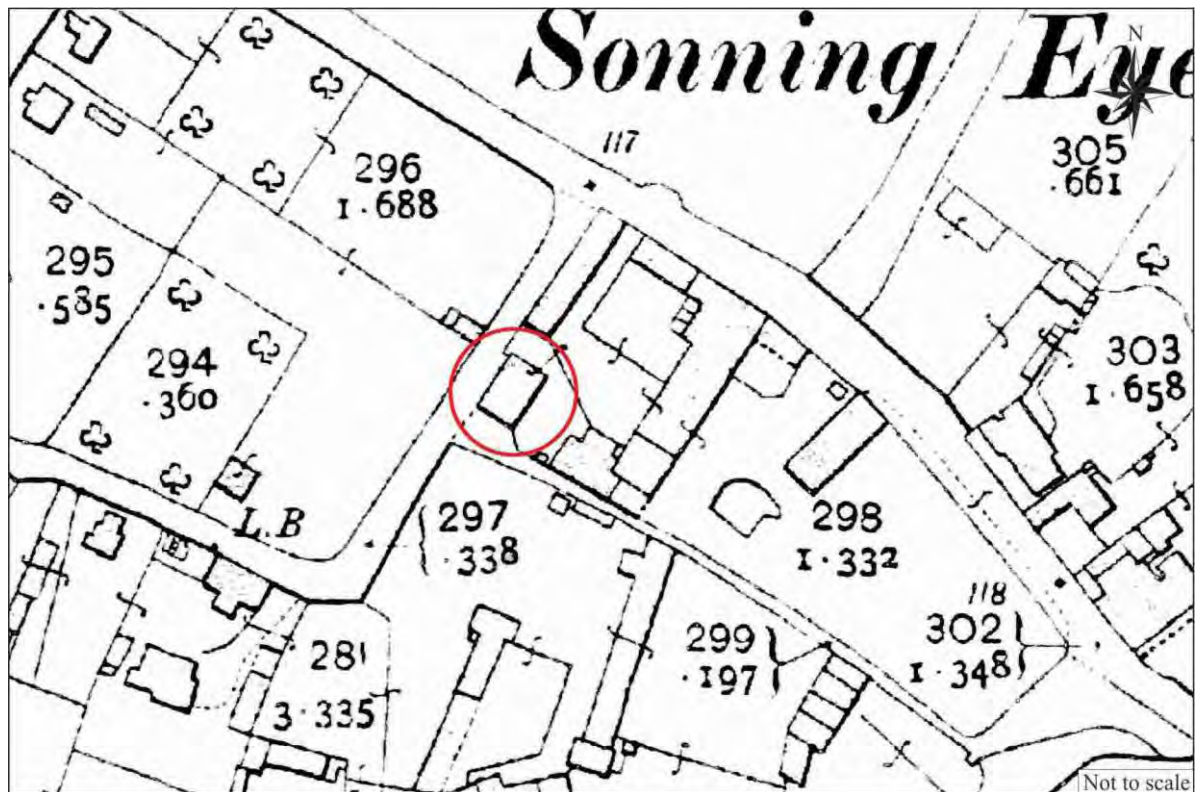


Figure 16: Third Edition Ordnance Survey map 1913

### 3 DESCRIPTION OF FRIZERS FARMHOUSE

#### 3.1 Introduction and General Description

Frizers Farmhouse is a building constructed of brick and timber. The main two storey part of the building forms an L-shape containing two main ranges with later single storey infill in the angle. The roof is of clay tile with a main L-shaped chimney located centrally along the main range of the building. There are two further chimneys.

The building appears to have been reorganised in its orientation as its design and relationship with the farmyard that was once in its curtilage has changed over time. This being the case it is apparent that the two most significant façades are located on the northeast and southeast side of the building. At present the main entrance appears to be located on the northwest side of the building that fronts onto the road.

#### 3.2 Northeast façade

The northeast façade is an elevation of brick, the majority of which measure approximately 220mm x 103mm x 50mm. The depth of brick would be consistent with a 16<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> century date. The bond is not a classic design and appears to be staggered and mixed to fit in with the window and door locations. This implies that the apertures are probably in their original locations.

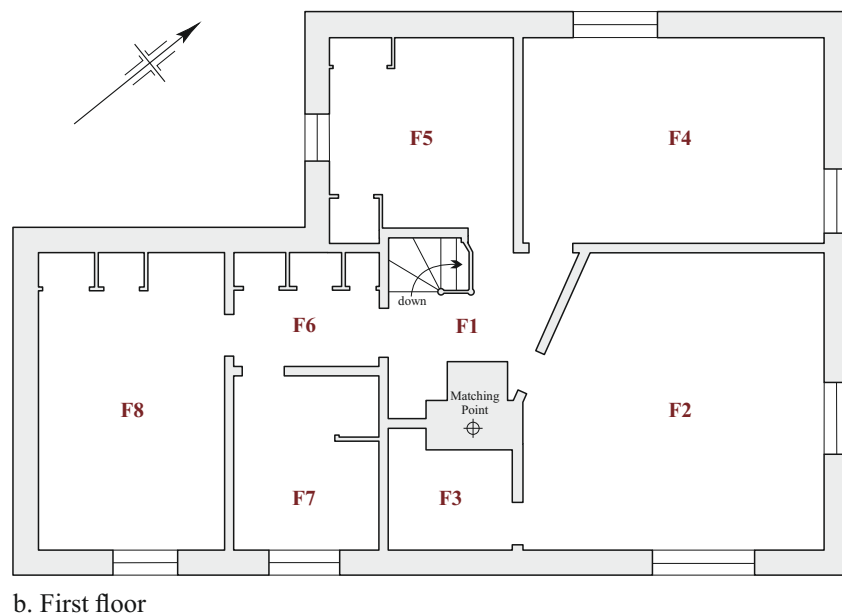


Figure 17: Floor plans



Plate 1: Northeast façade



Plate 2: Porch on the northeast façade

The façade is of three bays of which the central bay is made of a panel door with a timber framed porch (plate 1). The porch hood is moulded with its upper side covered in lead. The porch extends so far to be cantilevered and thus has two H framed supports on either side. Discussions on lead flashing are noted in 1832 and 1875, so these porches could be 19<sup>th</sup> century additions or later (plate 2). The two flanking bays contain timber framed windows with two mullions on the ground and first floor. Three of the windows contain three units with four lights. The window on the right hand side on the first floor contains two mullions, like the others, but instead of the three units being divided into four lights,

each of the three windows contains square lead tracery dividing the window into 12 lights. The differently designed window may reflect the original design of the windows, but it is not apparent from this visit if any of the glass used is early. The ground floor window on the right hand side also contains other noticeable differences in that there is a timber lintel above and that the bricks below the window are larger, implying a reworking of the brickwork.

The roof here is of red clay tile, and on the left side there is a gablet. On the right hand side of the roof there is a corner chimney with water tablet. The variation in the brick colour would tend to indicate that the chimney has been rebuilt at some date, probably with a new set of bricks. The chimney is mounted with a cylindrical pot.

### 3.3 Southeast façade



Plate 3: Southeast facade

The southeast façade contains four bays although the two southern bays run out of alignment (plate 3). On the right hand side of the elevation there is a gable end, which contains a single bay with a window on the ground floor and one on the first floor. The design of the windows is similar to that on the northeast elevation, mullioned, with three units with four lights. The gable above is tile hung; with the tiles either having square, rounded or wave ends. They are arranged in banks of three for an aesthetic effect. There is a later buttress on the left hand side of the gable constructed with bricks that measure 221mm x 110mm x 70mm approximately.

The rest of the elevation is staggered slightly forward and is constructed in brick of an irregular bond. The bricks are approximately 210mm x 100mm x 54-58mm, with most red but some are vitrified. Of the three bays that are located in this part of the façade, the right hand bay has a panel door on the ground floor. This has a cantilever porch above with no side supports and with lead sheeting on the upper side. The central and left hand bays contain windows with two mullions forming three units, each unit is divided into four lights. It is noticeable that the windows on the first floor are of a similar size to those in the east end gable and the northeast façade. However, those on the ground floor follow a similar design but are far larger and not aligned centrally with the windows above. The

area below the ground floor windows is rendered. The windows all have segmental headed arches above.



Plate 4: Chimneystack

Over this part of the building there is a red clay tile roof which is hipped on the left hand end and the roof extending over the pitch of the gable to the gablet of the northeast façade on the right hand side. Along the ridge line there is a chimneybreast of an L-shape with an upper and lower water tablet and a number of chimney pots (plate 4).

### **3.4 Southwest façade**

The southwest façade (plate 5) contains two component parts. On the right hand side there is a plain brick wall containing bricks approximately 210mm x 100mm x 54-58mm. A number of the bricks are vitrified. On the left hand side of this end wall there is a timber post, which may need treatment with a preservative. Above the wall is a hipped gable end.

The left hand component of the wall contains the end of a single storey lean-to building. The wall is of brick that measure approximately 226mm x 107mm x 74mm. There is a single window with a segmental arch with single mullioned window with each unit divided into four lights.

Above the lean-to there is a half storey development with a gable end with a single window. The window is mullioned, but with each unit containing two lights. The gable is weather-boarded. To the right of this gable is a chimney with water table. Behind the gable the wall line rises again to a further clay tile roof.





Plate 5: Southwest façade

### 3.5 Northwest façade



Plate 6: Northwest façade

The northwest façade (plate 6) contains a number of component parts. At the left hand end of the building is a gable end with a single bay set to the right hand side. On the ground floor is a modern door, probably in an old entrance, and above is a three unit mullioned window, with the windows containing twelve panes divided by lead tracery. In the gable there is a tile hung first floor and gable, which contains tiles with square, rounded or wave ends that form a pattern in the same way as the southeast gable. Over the left hand eaves

of the gable there is a chimney stack that has indications of a rebuild. Extending to the right from this gable is a wall of a one and a half storey component. These two components are joined and clad in the same material; on the ground floor render and on the first floor brick. On the ground floor of this component part there is a window with mullion and two lights either side. On the right hand side of this façade there is a ground floor lean-to with a red clay tile roof and brick band below the eaves.

Above the single storey lean-to and the one and a half storey development there is a tall chimney stack with water tablet. To the rear of the chimney there is a two storey range. Part of a timber framed wall is visible to the left of the chimney. The timber framing contains part of a jowl post. This implies that it is part of a former gable end, which is shown on the 19<sup>th</sup> century maps. The two data sets thus confirm that there was a second range of structures orientated northwest to southeast. Above this is a red clay tile roof. Set on the ridge of this roof is a chimney with upper and lower water tablet.

### 3.6 Ground floor



Plate 7: Front door with L-hinges

The main panel door in the northeast façade leads into room G1. This door contains six unequal panels of which the top two are glazed, and the fixtures contain two L-shaped hinges (plate 7). The panel door is similar to a dated example from Surrey dated 1712 (Alycock and Hall 1994, 18). The hinges are similar to examples from Gloucestershire dated 1707 (Alycock and Hall 1994, 25). On the northwest side of the room there is what appears to be the remains of a probable passage, which has been largely removed on the southeast side. The surround contains the remains of timber beams. On the northwest side of the former passage there is a further panel door reused, but in this case there are only

two panels. At the southwest end of the former passage there was a further door leading to the stairwell. In the main part of the room G1 there is a mullioned window in the northeast wall, and also one in the southeast wall. Both mullioned windows have three units with four lights. Centrally in the southwest wall there is a fireplace (plate 8), probably of an 18<sup>th</sup> century date, which is flanked by an alcove on the right and a four panel door in a wall slightly staggered into the room. The door also has L-shaped hinges fitted (plate 9), which are similar to some dated from Gloucestershire of 1707 (Alycock and Hall 1994, 25); however, the screws are possibly later. The surrounding frame and wall is of timber. The ceiling contains a central beam running from above the fireplace to above the window in the northeast wall. The ceiling on the southeast side contains an area of panelling. The room appears to be an 18<sup>th</sup> or very early 19<sup>th</sup> century reworking of an earlier structure.



Plate 8: Fireplace room G1

Through the panel door in the northwest corner of room G1 access takes place to room G2. There is an angled chimneybreast in the north corner. In the northeast wall there is a mullioned window with three units each with four panes. In the ceiling is the remains of a timber beam that runs axially to the roof system. The southwest wall has to be timber framed, but the framing is not visible in this room.

From room G1 a door leads into the stairwell G3 (plate 10). Here a spiral staircase is evident curving around a central timber. In the southwest wall there is evidence of a corner post. The northwest wall is staggered, but set in this wall are the remains of a plank door. This plank door has a handle similar to one from Suffolk dated 1718 (Alycock and Hall 1994, 26).



Plate 9: L-shaped hinge room G1



Plate 10: Stairwell G3

The northwest plank door in room G3 leads into room G4. This room is now used as the entrance hall onto the street; however, it was originally the rear of the property. The northeast wall in this room is timber framed in a box design. Running parallel to this is a timber in the ceiling and two studs (plate 11). This is the remains of the exterior wall. The ceiling between the wall and the partial remains of the wall is slightly higher than the rest of the room and contains a number of joists. At the northwest end of this former passage there is a modern door. In the other part of the room there is a brick wall with a timber beam in the southeast wall. The bricks measure 195mm x 110mm x 70mm. The depth of these bricks is indicative of this wall being late 18<sup>th</sup> century at the earliest. To the right of this wall there is a plank door that is approached up three steps. In the southwest wall there is a relatively central plank door, and in the northwest wall a window.



Plate 11: Room G4

The southwest door in room G4 leads into room G5. This is a rectangular room with modern bathroom fittings. An inbuilt cupboard is located on the northwest side and there is a chimneybreast located behind the toilet on the southeast side.

The southeast door from the entrance hall leads up into the kitchen G6. The door handle resembles an example from Gloucestershire dated 1637 and one from Kent of 1645 (Alycock and Hall 1994, 26). In the northeast wall there is a range set within a brick semi-circular arch (plate 14). The bricks here are 220mm x 110mm and 70mm, with some of the dimensions similar to that of the wall around the stairwell as evident in room G4. To the left of the semi-circular arch there are a group of bricks low down in the wall, perhaps part of an earlier dwarf wall, that measure 220mm x 110mm x 45mm. These represent some of the narrowest and perhaps earliest bricks recognised in the structure. There is a plank door in the wall to the right of the semi-circular arch with a significant timber above, which does not align with the joists in the ceiling of room G6. The door handle resembles an example from Gloucestershire dated 1637 and one from Kent of 1645 (Alycock and Hall 1994, 26). In the southeast wall there are two mullioned windows of three units with four panes each (plate 13). The windows are larger than most in the structure and are probably considerably later than the others, possibly late 19<sup>th</sup> century at the earliest. The west wall is blank and there is a second door in the northwest wall that leads to room G7. In the ceiling located centrally there is a chamfered beam (plate 12) with stops at the southeast

end, but none visible on the northwest end. The stops are simple and comparable to a dated example from Devon of 1591 (Alycock and Hall 1994, 36); however a similar stop is recognised at Siddenhales Farm, Hockley Heath in Warwickshire where a 17<sup>th</sup> century date is suggested (Mercer 1975, 214). There are a series of joists either side.



Plate 12: Beam room G6



Plate 13: Room G6 window



Plate 14: Brick feature room G6

Room G7 is a utility room with modern décor. There is a mullioned window in the southwest wall, which has two units with four panes. The door is in the southeast wall.

Room G8 is a small lobby passage and is entered from the eastern door of room G6. In the northeast wall there is a four panel door that leads back into room G1. In the southwest wall there is a plank door that leads back into the kitchen. In the southeast wall there is a panel door that is external and associated with the southeast façade (plate 15). This door has strap hinges with a base-plate similar to examples from Surrey of 1743 (Alycock and Hall 1994, 24).



Plate 15: Door and hinges room G8

### 3.7 First floor



Plate 16: Wall plate from front range F1



Plate 17: Post in F1



The spiral stairs ascends from room G3 to landing F1. Towards the top of the stairs they bifurcate with the left going to F1 and the other extending to a door so that it reaches landing F6 through an opening or doorway. In the southeast wall, which is set against the main chimneybreast there appears to be a buttress-like structure, which must actually extend out over the alcove alongside the fireplace below (plate 16). The landing F1 is a small roughly triangular shape, with two doors in the northwest wall and one in the angled east wall. There is a simple rail at that top of the stairs and a simple square centre post. In the southeast wall there are the remains of a corner post for a further southwest development of the structure (plate 17). The ceiling is on two levels, and running between these different heights are the remains of two wall plates (plate 16), with central join, and attached rafters. This is part of the original roof structure of the building, onto which other roof structures overlie.

The plank door in the east wall leads into room F2, a square or rectangular room with the one corner cut off creating a polygonal shape. In the northeast wall there is a mullioned window with three units containing four panes. There is a similar window in the southeast wall. In the southwest wall there is a fireplace and a plank door to the left. The angled wall looks like a latter insertion in what must have been an original two up and two down structure. The ceiling continues up into the wall space and evidence of trusses with a collar beam and struts are evident. The floor contains widely cut planks (plate 18), which implies they are at least early 19<sup>th</sup> century, but probably earlier.



Plate 18: Wide floorboards room F2

The southwest door from room F2 enters room F3 an en-suit bathroom. The room is L-shaped with no window. The most significant feature here is that the wall plate of the northeast roof structure (plate 19) can be seen to continue into this room creating two different roof levels. Rafters are attached to the wall plate. In the southwest wall there are the remains of timber framing (plate 20).



Plate 19: Wall plate in room F3



Plate 20: Timber framing room F3

From landing F1 a plank door enters room F4. In the northeast wall there is a mullioned window, with three units containing lead tracery creating 12 panes. In the northwest wall there is a similar window. The ceiling, like that in F2, continues up into the attic space revealing evidence of truss construction with collar beam and struts (plate 21). There is a further offset upright above the collar beam.



Plate 21: Part of truss room F4

The only other door of the triangular part of landing F1 is a plank door entering room F5 (plate 22). This room sits within a half storey addition with some timber framing in the ceiling. One of these on the southeast side appears to be part of an earlier wall plate, with the wall line underneath being re-arranged. In the southwest wall there is a mullioned window with each unit having two panes.



Plate 22: Room F5

Room F6 is entered by following the right hand bifurcation on the stairs. This is an elongated landing with built-in cupboards along the northwest wall line. In the rear wall of the cupboards there is evidence of timber framing, most notably a wall plate that must line up with the corner post visible in F1 and externally on the southwest façade. There is a plank door in the southeast and southwest walls.

The plank door on the southeast side leads into room F7; hinges undated that may be more recent due to hinge arrangement. In the southeast wall there is a mullioned window with three units containing four panes each.



Plate 23: Early hinges room F8



Plate 24: Chamfered beam room F8

The plank door in the southwest wall of room F6 leads into room F8. The plank door may be earlier than most due to the moulding between the planks, and the hinges (plate 23) are similar to examples from Wight dated 1727 and Gloucestershire from 1707 (Alycock and Hall 1994, 24). The screws in the hinge are not old. On the northeast wall there are built-in cupboards, behind which there are indications of a timber framed wall. In the southeast wall there is a mullioned window with three units each containing four panes. The ceiling beam contains chamfers and stops (plate 24); the stops are similar to those from Devon dated 1591 (Alycock and Hall 1994, 36).

### 3.8 Attic

The attic appears to contain three component parts. The earliest is located over the northeast part of the house and contains a frame of three trusses, rafters, purlins, braces and ridge beam (plate 25). Overlapping this is the roof orientated northeast to southwest. This has bracing timbers between the chimneybreast and the earlier roof. On the southwest side of the chimneybreast there is evidence of a box-framed truss, which may originally have been a gable (plate 26). This truss is located where the northwest wall line is staggered. The truss within the further extension appears to contain a collar beam only.



Plate 25: Timber frame of northeast range being built onto by later roof structure



Plate 26: Truss in attic

## 4 ASSESSMENT

### 4.1 Phases

The phasing of this building if not problematic is presumably not straight forward. One has to consider that the earliest phase of the building saw the construction of a unit around G1 and G2 and contained part of the northeast end of room G4. This building may have had a central passageway that led from the front door to the location of the spiral staircase. The reason for stating this is to be seen in the attic, where the roof timbers of the other part of the building are seen to bridge over the top of the earlier timber frame (plate 25). The date of this earlier construction is difficult to properly assess and it is not overly apparent if the two chimneys that now serve this part of the building were originally attached to it. The datable décor on the ground floor may be considerably later. It is difficult to precisely date the timber framing here as none is clearly visible, with the wall between rooms G2 and G4 presumably being a later insertion.

A further phase probably saw an addition thus creating an L-shaped structure around the current chimneybreast. In the attic space it is apparent that there is a small box-framed gable. It is not apparent how this was arranged around the chimneybreast as this extension appears to leave little space around the chimneybreast. Part of a dwarf wall may survive in this area, visible in the northeast wall of room G6 the kitchen. That the longer northeast to southwest range should be divided into two is suggested by the stagger in the line of the northwest wall.



Plate 27: Timber framing with remains of jowl post

The maps clearly show that the south and east end of the building were previously arranged differently. The series of maps through the early 19<sup>th</sup> century appear to show a wing extending from the southeast side. That there was a further part of the building, a range orientated northwest to southeast is evident in the jowl post that is located in the external timber framing in the northwest wall (plate 27). A jowl in a timber-framed building is positioned so that it faces inward to the building. This is not the case in the current position, and would indicate that this post is part of the remains of a northwest to southeast range as shown on the maps. There is perhaps a possibility that the two southeast to northwest ranges orientated as two standalone structures. The date at which this range was constructed is not overly apparent as not much of it remains. The maps indicate that the structure was probably there from at least the latter part of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and that its southeast end had been removed at some time in the third quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. However, this early building developed, the space in-between the two ranges was infilled. This development could have taken place within two, three or four phases. At present all it is possible to do is indicate that this was developed as phase 2, with the probability that this was divided into a number of sub-phases.

The maps also appear to indicate that there was a further small extension on the southeast side of the building, which was certainly in existence in the first part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. A further part of the structure, the one and a half storey part of the structure that contains most of room G4 was butted up to the two storey ranges. This would indicate a later construction. This structure is probably 18<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> century (phase 3). The earlier timber frame structure was refurbished in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and the brick cladding of the timber frame structure may also have occurred at this time.

The remaining positive phase of the building saw the addition of the single storey structure on the west side of the building. Map evidence would indicate that this was done 1841 to 1845 (phase 4).

There is map evidence to indicate that parts of the structure were re-organised. The southeast extension was partially dismantled from 1845 to 1876, and the small extension on the southwest side of the building was removed. This implies that the southeast and

southwest walls of the building must have undergone considerable periods of rebuilding at this time (phase 5). This essentially indicates that the structure developed into its current form in the mid part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

## **4.2 Listed Status**

The building is a listed structure, and is thus considered to be of national importance.

## **4.3 Historic and Architectural Assessment**

Historically the structure was constructed on the estate of Sonning manor. This manor was initially owned by the bishops of Salisbury and was later exchanged with the Queen. The manor saw a further series of later exchanges and Frizers Farm was possibly in the 16<sup>th</sup> century or certainly the 17<sup>th</sup> century constructed on this manor for a tenant farmer.

The building is a complex structure, and even though analysis of the building and cartographic regression can appear to sort out some of the phasing and dating it is not conclusive due to the total overhaul that parts of the building were given in the 19<sup>th</sup> century between 1845 and 1876.

The earliest part of the building probably has a 17<sup>th</sup> or even a 16<sup>th</sup> century origin and covers the low front or northeast range. Two further two storey structures were constructed probably in the 17<sup>th</sup> or at the latest the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, which extended the structure to the southwest and then the southeast. That there were two further ranges is evident in map regression and in physical evidence. From what is visible it is not overly easy to determine in what order this occurred. It is apparent that the roof system overlies the earlier roof system of the lower northwest range.

Two additions to the building, an extension on the southwest end and the one and a half storey addition on the northwest side must have been added in the 18<sup>th</sup> or at the very least the early 19<sup>th</sup> century (phase 3). Map evidence indicates that a further addition to the structure, a single storey extension was added to the building 1841 to 1845 (phase 4).

The shape of the building changes in the years from 1845 to 1876; with a southeast wing being dismantled and a southwest feature being removed. Why this should occur is not known. In other building studies such activities have occurred for a number of reasons. At Oddington House in Gloucestershire the east wing of the building was removed because the house was considered too large for the requirements of the current owner. In other cases buildings have been transformed due to fire damage. In the case of Hanwell Castle parts of the manor were removed because the lord was not resident and when the tenant farms were sold off individually the new owners were not economically able to maintain the size of the new structure. It is probably for one of these reasons or some other that the size of the building was reduced and then subsequently reworked.

It is also of interest that the brick sizes around the current building are predominantly of a size that one would expect to be produced from the 16<sup>th</sup> to early 18<sup>th</sup> century. However, this does not match very well with other aspects known of the structure. It is known that the rebuilding and replacement of timber-framed walls with brick ones occurred in the 18<sup>th</sup>



century. What this would imply is that the bricks are older and that they may well be being recycled in certain places.

The porches appear to be of a late date, as the timber on the porch of the front façade would appear to be of a slender cut modern timber design. A 20<sup>th</sup> century date would be appropriate for this feature; however, it is apparent that there is a porch drawn on the front of the building on the 1876 map.

## **5 THE CURRENT PROPOSAL**

The current proposal is to replace the current outbuilding with an extension to the house. The construction of this building will not impinge on the present listed structure; however, it is in the area of a former wing of the farmhouse. Here we have noted four potential possibilities for this development, although there are potentially others.

The first which will have the least impact on the listed structure is to put a passageway or conservatory that links to the door in the southeast façade. The porch here would appear to be of a recent origin. It could be re-used on the current roadside door. This proposal would have little impact on the historic structure and would probably help with heat loss on the southeast side of the building.

The second option is to insert a new door in the location of the kitchen window on the southwest side. This will mean the loss of a 19<sup>th</sup> century window and alterations to the reworking of the 19<sup>th</sup> century wall. It is not known if there is any timber framing located behind this, but this can always be ascertained with the stripping away of plaster. This would cause minimal damage of an unknown nature to the structure.

The third option is to insert a doorway through the brick wall of the southwest wall. This will remove brickwork possibly associated with a 19<sup>th</sup> century reworking of the wall. It is not known if there is any timber framing located behind the outside brickwork, although this could also be tested with the stripping of internal plaster. The extent of damage to the historic fabric is, therefore, unknown but impact would be minimal.

The fourth option would remove the window in the southwest wall of the single storey unit and insert a new door. In this case the wall removed would only be of brickwork of an 1841-1845 date. This will have a minimal impact on the fabric of the building, but this damage is quantifiable. What this proposal will do is cut down the amount of already restricted car parking space.

These four possible proposals are all that are considered here, although there are undoubtedly other possible options that could be explored and discussed between the Conservation Officer, Client and Client's Architects. The present proposals fall into a category where there is none or minimal damage to the listed building as they currently stand.

## **6 CONCLUSIONS**

Frizers Farmhouse is located in the present parish of Eye and Dunsden at Sonning Eye. Historically the house was located in the parish of Sonning, with this part of that parish being located in Binfield Hundred in the County of Oxfordshire, with the rest of the parish being located in Berkshire. The site is located on an island in a braided passage of the River Thames.

The building is a listed structure with a complicated development. The earliest development saw the construction of a two-up two-down, which was orientated northwest to southeast. The date at which this occurred is probably at least 17<sup>th</sup> century, but may have occurred in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Phase 2 covers a probably more complicated development of the building, as we can historically identify a number of developments, but at present have not been able to precisely define how this process developed. It is apparent from a jowl post and map evidence that there was a further northwest to southeast orientated range and that these two ranges were joined together by an irregular range. The middle range appears as if it could be created of two different sections, which have slightly different widths. The roof of this part of the structure extends over the roof structure of the earlier northwest range. There is undoubtedly more than one single phase in this development, possibly 17<sup>th</sup> century or early 18<sup>th</sup> century, but it is difficult with the surviving evidence to be totally accurate with this development.

There is then evidence for a third phase of the building that saw a slight extension to the southeast elevation, as defined by cartographic evidence, and also a further addition a one and a half storey development on the southeast side of the building. The fourth phase on the building saw the insertion of a single storey extension on the west corner, which does not occur on the map of 1841 but does form part of the shape of the building on the 1845 map.

Map evidence subsequently indicates that the building saw certain parts of the structure removed. There was a wing on the east side of the structure that was removed and also the slight extension on the south side. Why this major reworking of the building occurred is not overly apparent; was it due to neglect, fire damage, a too large a building that caused the structure to be reduced in size at this point, or was the tenant farm sold. This redevelopment of the building would indicate that the external walls of the building were reworked on the southeast and northwest sides of the structure and that these windows must have ended up in their current form at some date from 1845 to 1876.

The porches look like a late addition as the timber appears to be machine cut and slender. A 20<sup>th</sup> century date is appropriate for these pieces, but it is apparent that a porch is drawn on the front of the house on the 1876 map, if not on later ones. No porch is shown on the southeast side.

The proposal is for the replacement of the outbuilding with an extension to the house. .

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