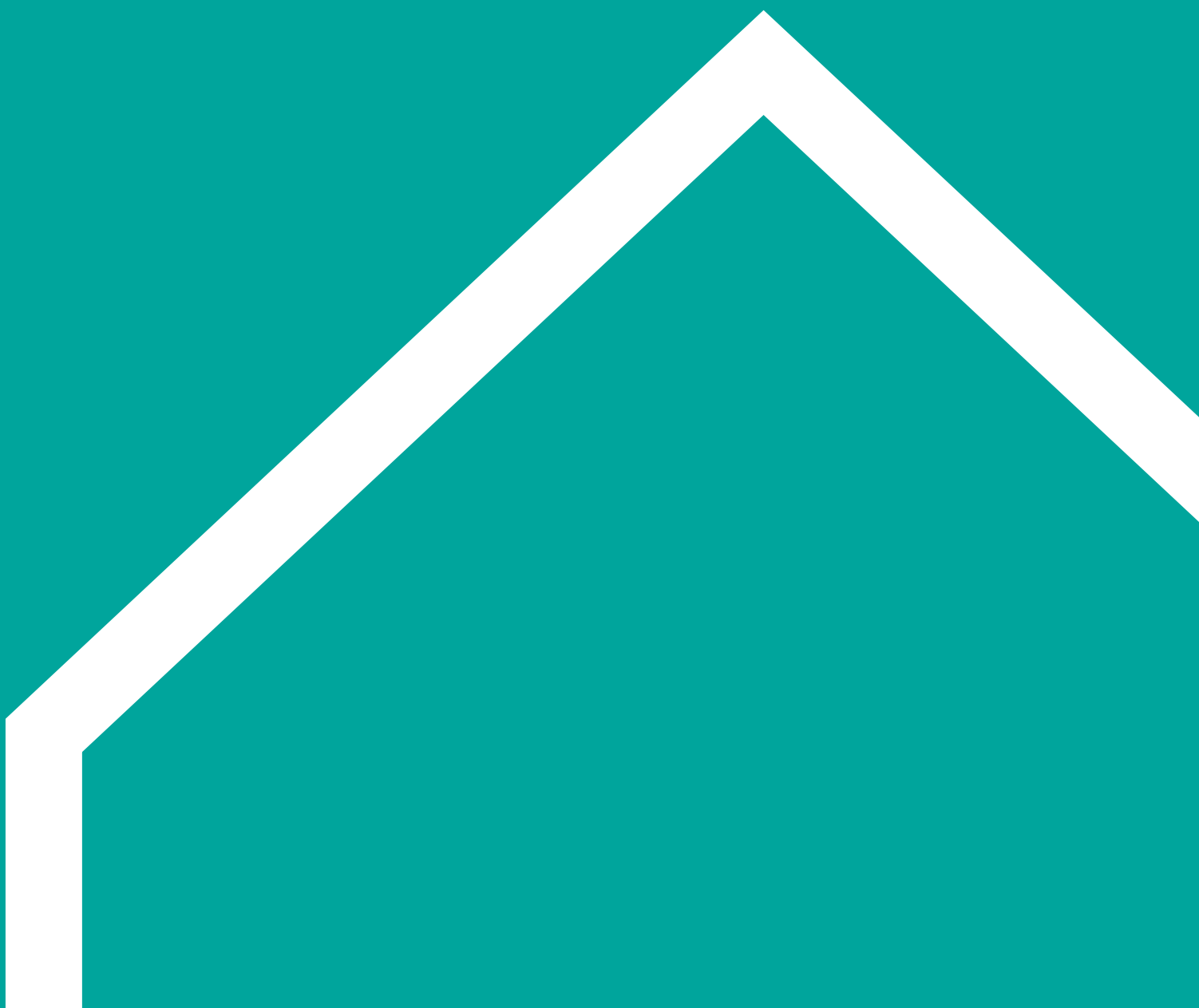


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Heritage Impact Assessment and Design and Access Statement

Single storey extension

Park Stile Mill, Mahollem, Herefordshire,
HR5 3PT

October 2023



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PROJECT
Demolition of existing lean to and erection of single storey extension

BERRYS

Beech House
Anchorage Avenue
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Contents

1. Introduction.....4

2. Methodology.....6

3. Identifying Heritage Assets.....7

4. Planning Policy.....9

5. Historic Development & Appraisal.....11

6. Heritage Impact Assessment16

7. Conclusion20

8. Appendix 1 – Historic Photographs21

9. Appendix 2 – Photographs of Site25

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This Heritage Impact Assessment has been prepared to accompany an application for Listed Building Consent and planning permission for an extension to the grade II listed Park Stile Mill, Mahollem, Herefordshire, HR5 3PT, hereafter referred to as the 'Site'.
- 1.2. The purpose of this report is to understand, assess the significance and to analyse the impact of the proposed work including in order to comply with paragraph 194 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Historic England Advice Note 12.
- 1.3. Previous application ref: 231462 (planning) and 230961 (Listed Building Consent) for an extension to the western side of the Mill were both refused by Herefordshire Council on 13th October 2023 with the decision notice stating that:

*"The proposal is of an **inappropriate location, scale, mass and form** and would **cause harm to the character, appearance and setting** of a designated heritage asset and furthermore **the harm is not outweighed by any material public benefit or interest**. As such the proposal is contrary to the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Herefordshire Core Strategy policies SS6, LD1 and LD4 and the design and heritage aims and objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework."*
- 1.4. The Conservation Officer noted within their consultation feedback that:

"The proposed extension would be linked to the principal listed building by a glazed link which bridges the mill race. The extension so sited would affect the legibility of the property to a degree that the significance of the mill wheel, the mill race and as such the mill itself would be harmed by the proposal."
- 1.5. The new proposals have been compiled to address the concerns raised whilst aiming to achieve a sustainable and low impact solution to improving the living arrangements and available habitable space within the existing building and its grounds.

- 1.6. This Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) should be read in conjunction with the other supporting planning documents and drawings prepared by Berrys and other consultants.

2. Methodology

- 2.1. The methodology in this report will be based upon Historic England's Good Practice Advice in Planning 21 (GPA 2), Historic England's Advice Note 2 (HEAN 2), Historic England's Advice Note 10 (HEAN 10) and Historic England's Advice Note 12 (HEAN 12).
- 2.2. The report has primarily been produced through desktop research, using relevant secondary sources including:
- Historic Environment Records (HER)
 - Historic England National Heritage List England (NHLE)
 - UK Census Records (online resource)
 - National Library of Scotland (online resource)
 - Herefordshire Record Office
- 2.3. A site visit was originally conducted on 18th January 2023 to assess the significance of the identified heritage asset and to take photos. Conditions were bright and clear, with recent snowfall and frost on the ground. Seasonal changes meant leaf cover was minimal and foliage did not provide as much screening as it would during Spring and Summer, which should be considered.
- 2.4. The assessment is primarily a desk-based study which has utilised secondary sources derived from a variety of published sources. The assumption has been made that this data is reasonably accurate. The records held by the HER and historic maps are not an infinite record of all heritage assets, but a record of the discovery of historic features.

3. Identifying Heritage Assets

3.1. The NPPF defines a Heritage Asset as:

‘A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).’

3.2. The Site is the grade II listed Park Stile Mill which is recorded on the Historic England National Heritage list (Ref. 1349916), found in the western side of Herefordshire, near the Welsh border and town of Kington.

3.3. Figure 1 shows the Site within its local context and setting, with nearby heritage assets labelled.

Figure 1 – Location of site (source google earth)



Site and Listed Building

Figure 2. Park Stile Mill as indicated on the National Heritage List for England map (Source: NHLE [Accessed 1.11.23])

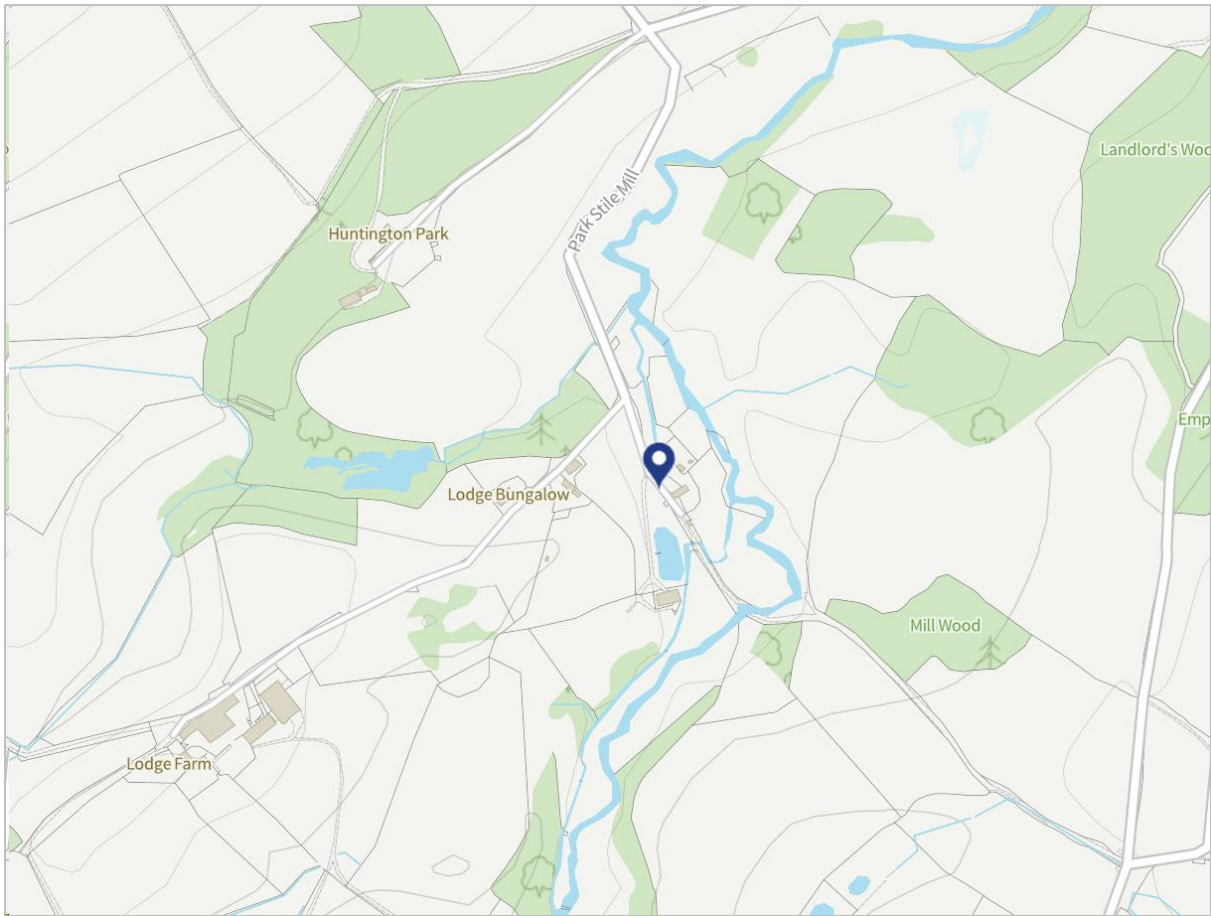


Table 1 - Listed Buildings

Name	Listing	Description
Park Stile Mill	II	<p>Cornmill, now house. C18, with late C19 and C20 alterations. Painted sandstone rubble, part Welsh slate and part stone slate roof. Rectangular plan aligned north-east/south-west with house part with gable-end stack to north-east and mill workings at south-west end with wheel to rear (north-west).</p> <p>C19 additions to both gable ends. Two storeys and attic. South-east entrance front: one central gabled dormer with a 2-light casement window, two C20 windows to first floor, ground floor; one C20 French casement to left of C20 window with similar casement and windows to right, ledged door in lean-to to right, C19 addition to left end with loft opening and garage entrance to ground floor. Interior retains mill workings which appear largely complete and inscribed on a hopper in the upper floor is a list of milling prices and costs.</p>

4. Planning Policy

4.1. Planning decisions should be taken in accordance with local plan policy unless material considerations indicate otherwise, Section 38(6) of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 refers. This statement is written in the context of the following legislative, planning policy and guidance:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2023).
- National Planning Practice Guidance: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment (2021)
- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act (1990).
- Historic England - Good Practice Guide 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (2015).
- Historic England – Advice Note 2: Making Changes to Heritage Assets.
- Historic England – Advice Note 10: Listed Buildings and Curtilage

4.2. Section 16 of the NPPF contains policies for conserving and enhancing the historic environment. The Site is an identified non-designated heritage asset; therefore, paragraph 202 is most relevant to this development:

“Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.”

4.3. The following policies from the Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy (2015) are also relevant:

- Policy SS6 – Environment Quality and Local Distinctiveness
- Policy LD4 – Historic Environment and Heritage Assets

4.4. The following objectives from the Kington Area Neighbourhood Plan 2019-2031 are also relevant:

- KANP Objective 2 – Protect and enhance the local built environment.

- KANP Objective 4 – To Deliver the highest standard of design that will respect the scale, style and setting of the historic townscape and rural landscape.
- KANP Objective 7 – To promote Kington and its hinterland as a location which promotes small businesses, supports farming and its diversification and encourages young members of the community to seek employment locally and remain in the area.

5. Historic Development & Appraisal

- 5.1. The Site is a grade II listed former mill located in the hamlet of Mahollem, roughly 3 miles southwest of the town of Kington and roughly 1.25 miles from the Welsh border.
- 5.2. Kington is a market town located in the county of Herefordshire, England. The town has a rich history dating back to the Anglo-Saxon period and was mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086.
- 5.3. In the medieval period, Kington was an important centre for trade and commerce, with a thriving wool industry. The town also played a role in the English Civil War, with both Royalist and Parliamentary forces occupying the town at various times.
- 5.4. During the 18th and 19th centuries, Kington continued to grow as a centre for trade, with industries such as brewing, tanning, and milling becoming prominent. In the 20th century, the town saw the development of new industries such as engineering and plastics.
- 5.5. Today, Kington is a popular tourist destination known for its picturesque countryside, historic architecture, and vibrant arts scene. The town is also home to a number of annual festivals and events, including the Kington Show and the Kington Walking Festival.
- 5.6. Tithe records (Figure 2) dating to 1843 indicate that the landowner was James Cheese, with the occupier being Samuel Meek. The land is described as 'Park Stile Mill. House Mill Buildings and Yard.' At this point in time, the mill would have served as an important focal point for the local community. As the main source for an important staple in the diet, it would have been vital to the survival of the local populace and also served as a communal gathering point where news could be exchanged.

- 5.7. Map regression (Figures 3-5) shows the mill was likely still in use up until at least 1928. This is further evidenced by Herefordshire HER which suggests the mill was in use until 1956. Cartographic evidence shows there has been little change to the rural character of the Site. Surrounding landscape has stayed in use for various farming practices, focussed mostly on pastoral farming and the rearing of sheep. There has been no new development, with the exception of Huntingdon Park House, which appears to have been developed sometime between 1928-1964.
- 5.8. The Site itself is comprised of stone rubble which has been painted white externally. Structurally, the building is timber-framed, which is exposed in some locations whilst windows are casement and timber framed, though do not appear to be original. The roof is pitched on two levels, with the exception of a lean-to on the north. Internally, the building is divided between the converted living premises and the original inner mill workings. The modern living section has three stories, whilst the mill is only divided into two levels internally. The mill section still retains the inner workings, including the grindstone and a panel detailing the cost for grinding of specific crops. Externally, the waterwheel is still retained, which is still placed in-situ above the pre-existing water course.
- 5.9. The Site is therefore of significant historic and architectural interest, as it provides a good surviving example of a cornmill within its original rural setting, where it would have been a vital part of the local community. There has been little alteration to the Site which could have harmed its significance and there has not been any modern development within the local area to impact upon its setting.



Figure 3 - Aerial view of the Site, with the non-designated farmstead labelled.

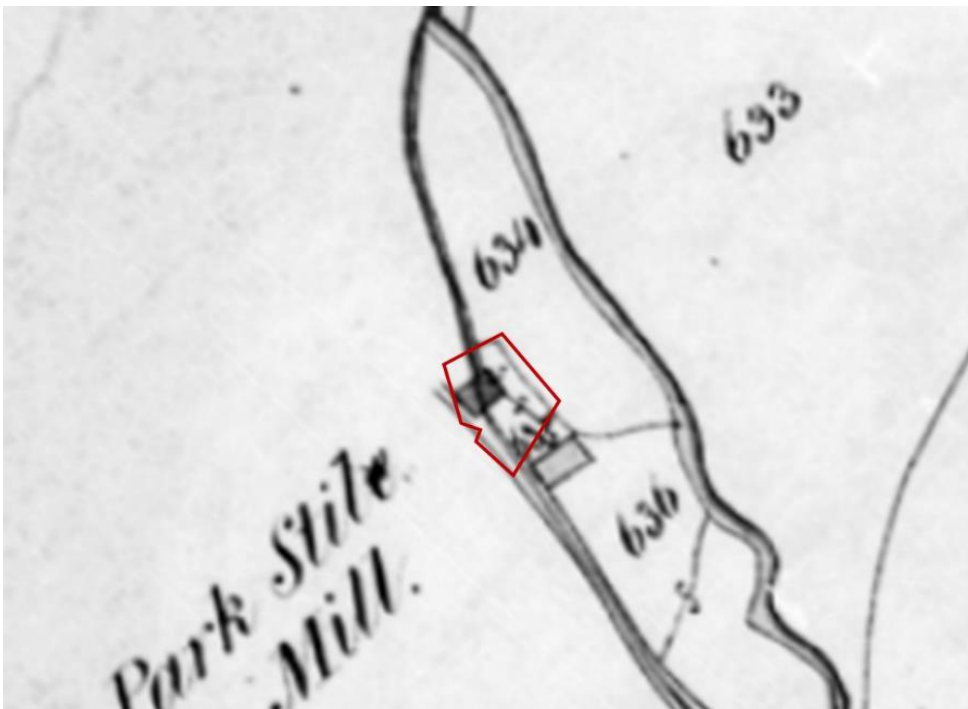


Figure 4 - Tithe map, dated 1843.

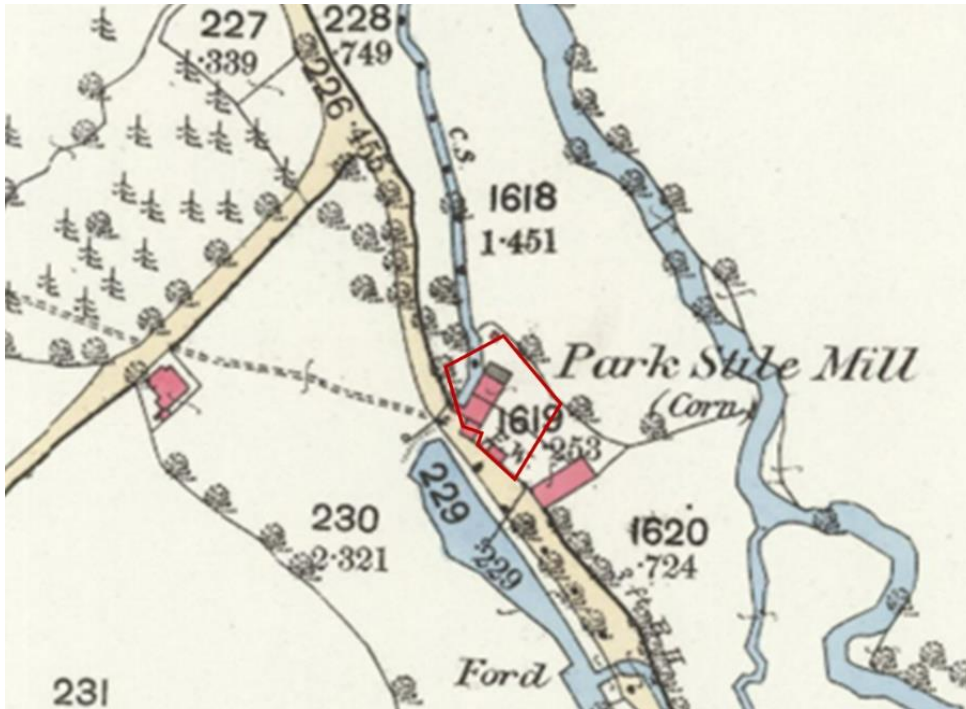


Figure 5 - OS map, 1888.

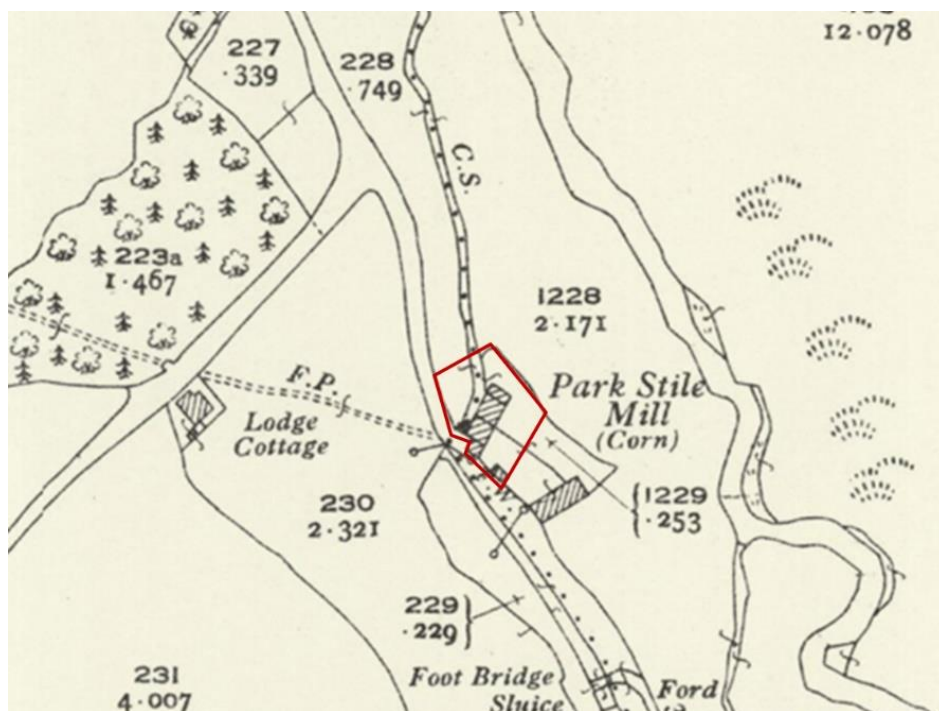


Figure 6 – OS map, 1928.

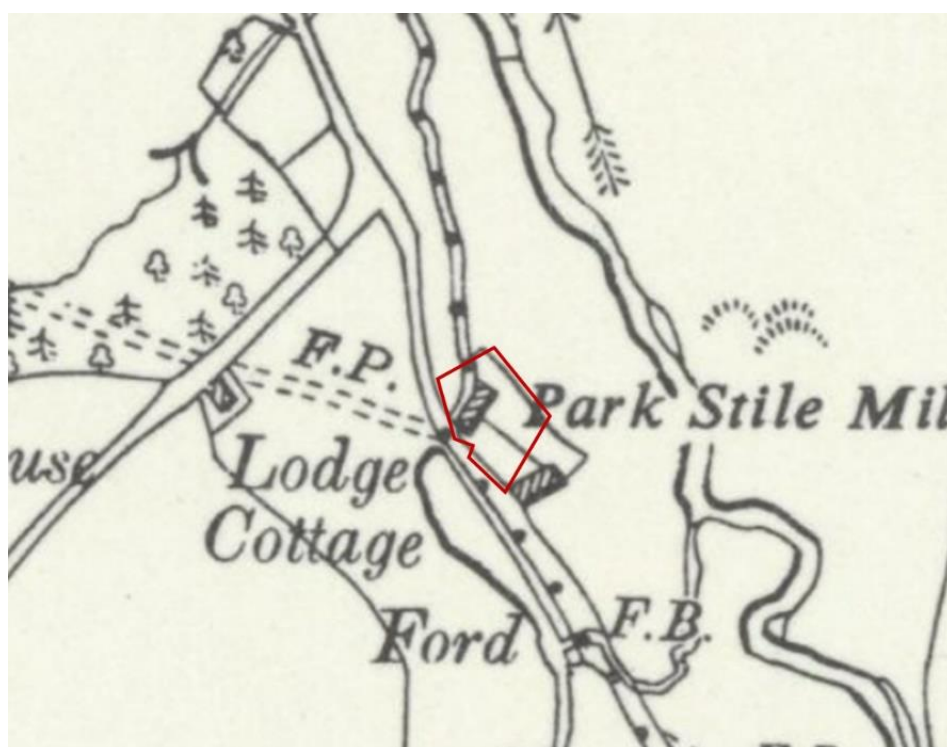


Figure 7 – OS map, 1964.

6. Heritage Impact Assessment

- 6.1. The proposal seeks to extend Park Stile Mill to optimise the Site's potential as a private dwelling. It is therefore necessary to assess the historic, architectural or archaeological significance which could be impacted by this proposal.

The NPPF defines significance (when in relation to heritage) as follows:

"The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting. For World Heritage Sites, the cultural value described within each site's Statement of Outstanding Universal Value forms part of its significance."

- 6.2. The Site is of historic and architectural interest, as detailed in 5.12. Whilst the building itself is of some architectural interest as an example of rural working vernacular, the main significance lies with the historic use as a cornmill and the survival of the interior and exterior mill apparatus.
- 6.3. The applicants are considerate of the significance of the mill and its remains and want to leave this in-situ. Currently this part of the building is used as ad-hoc storage. Longer-term, they will look to carry out works which further reveal the significance of the Site and formalise this as a home office/storage area which is thought to be a use that offers the most practical use to avoid any intervention with the physical fabric, rather than seeking to rationalise the existing levels and entirety of the building to seek additional living space. Therefore, an extension that includes the demolition of the lesser significant lean to was considered the best possible option for providing the space required.
- 6.4. The proposals for a modern extension to the Site will change the appearance of the Site from limited number of viewpoints, altering the overall footprint and material composition of the Site as a whole. The proposed extension is located to the north/north-east and is a fully attached extension.

The extension is a single storey and utilises reclaimed slate roof tiles to ensure continuity of appearance at roofline, and black timber cladding across the extension elevations to reduce the high contrast of material associated with modern brick, masonry, steel or green-oak construction.

- 6.5. The position and location of the extension has been chosen to mitigate the impacting the historically significant water wheel feature and mill race. The extension also adjoins the later utility room extension which is far less significant fabric. The designs have also sought to abut the historic core to reduce loss of historic fabric, instead exploiting the existing openings of the present utility extension and extending the linear form.
- 6.6. At present the Site cannot viably be returned to use as a functioning mill, and therefore its continued conservation as a designated heritage asset is tied to its ongoing use as a private dwelling. The Site successfully evolved into a residence in the past, and has absorbed further changes in footprint size with the existing north-eastern extension, as well as minimal landscaping changes in the grounds (e.g. shed and vegetable patch) that now form the domestic gardens surrounding the Site. These changes have secured the asset's survival by allowing a degree of development that is sensitive to the heritage asset. Each change however has retained the legibility of the mill and its function.
- 6.7. The proposals represent an approximate 30% increase in footprint entirely made up of a single storey attached extension. Importantly, the extension will be subservient to the historic core which is storey storeys and more dominant in scale and mass. The extensions sits 'behind' and extends the linear form of the building.
- 6.8. The Site's historic interest is maintained as the proposals do not seek to replicate or disguise the contemporary extension; the use of black timber cladding across the elevations ensures a strong but neutral tonal contrast to the whitewashed historic core building, which ensures legibility of contemporary design, whilst the use of reclaimed roof tiles allows a degree of integration with the historic roofscape.

- 6.9. The principle of an extension has been considered acceptable by the Local Planning Authority during the pre-application process (Ref. 212176) where suggestions for alternative locations for the proposed extension were made by the Conservation Officer:

“the only suitable location for the extension is to the north-east of the building, accessed via the utility room.”

- 6.10. Following the refused application 231462 the concerns raised over the original location of the extension have been addressed by placing the new proposed extension in the advised location, allowing the historic core and waterwheel to be appreciated from approaching views without obscurity and remain undisturbed physically by the proposals.
- 6.11. Works to make good the pantry window and extract openings will result in an enhancement to the building's architectural interest by removing unsympathetic interventions into the historic elevation.
- 6.12. The improvements to the utility room and its amalgamation into the new extension improve the architectural composition of the Site as a whole. The utility space is of poor architectural quality and has a negative impact on the architectural interest of the Site.
- 6.13. The degree of glazing has been reduced in comparison to previous applications and is located at the gable end of the extension, the furthest point from the historic core building. The inclusion of a dual aspect door arrangement contributes to the legibility of the extension as a contemporary construction. The overall effect of the glazing on the significance of the Site is a contribution as part of the extension to less than substantial harm arising from the visual changes within the setting of the asset.
- 6.14. The proposed works will look to further reveal the significance of the Site, particularly in relation to the historically significant waterwheel. This element of the Site, whilst significant, is easily missed when walking past the building.
- 6.15. The proposals result in a very low degree of less than substantial harm to the asset and do not compromise the mill's historic plant. The extension

changes the overall appearance and footprint of the building; however this change has been managed carefully by following officer's advice and placing the extension entirely to the north east, away from the significant features of the mill wheels, the core as viewed from access track and the internal surviving mill mechanisms and fixtures. This has the added advantage of being a reversible alteration without compromising the integrity of historic fabric or the significance of the asset.

7. Conclusion

- 7.1. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) helps to define what constitutes harm and how to assess the impact. It explains that:

“It is the degree of harms to the asset’s significance rather than the scale of the development that is to be assessed. The harm may arise from works to the asset or from development within its setting.”

- 7.2. It should be noted that the Site is a designated heritage asset and therefore is afforded a level of legal protection. The NPPF confirms that developments which lead to less than substantial harm to designated heritage assets should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.
- 7.3. The proposal will result in a very low degree of less than substantial harm to Park Stile Mill. The appearance of the Site will be altered; however, it has been demonstrated that the effects of this change cause very little impact to the areas of the building contributing to its significance.
- 7.4. The Site has absorbed change in the past which, whilst negatively contributing to the Site’s overall significance, has successfully preserved the key aspects of its architectural and historic interest comprising its significance. There is therefore capacity of the Site to absorb further considered changes where cumulative impact is avoided. The potential for the proposals to contribute to cumulative impact has been mitigated by the amalgamation of the negative utility extension into the proposed extension thereby improving an historic addition which at present contributes negatively to the Site’s significance.
- 7.5. The preservation of the Site through its improved prospects as a habitable building with sufficient living space for modern family contributes to its long-term future as a designated heritage asset. The proposal will secure the optimum viable use of the Site, as a private dwelling, without compromising the historically significant mill workings.

8. Appendix 1 – Historic Photographs



Figure 1 – Historic photo of the Site, though to date from the 1950s.



Figure 2 - Historic photo of the Site, thought to date from the 1950s with later extension and porch.



Figure 3 - Historic photo of the Site, though to date from the 1950s.



Figure 4 - Historic photo of the Site, though to date from the 1950s.

9. Appendix 2 – Photographs of Site



Figure 5 – The principal, south-east elevation of the Site.

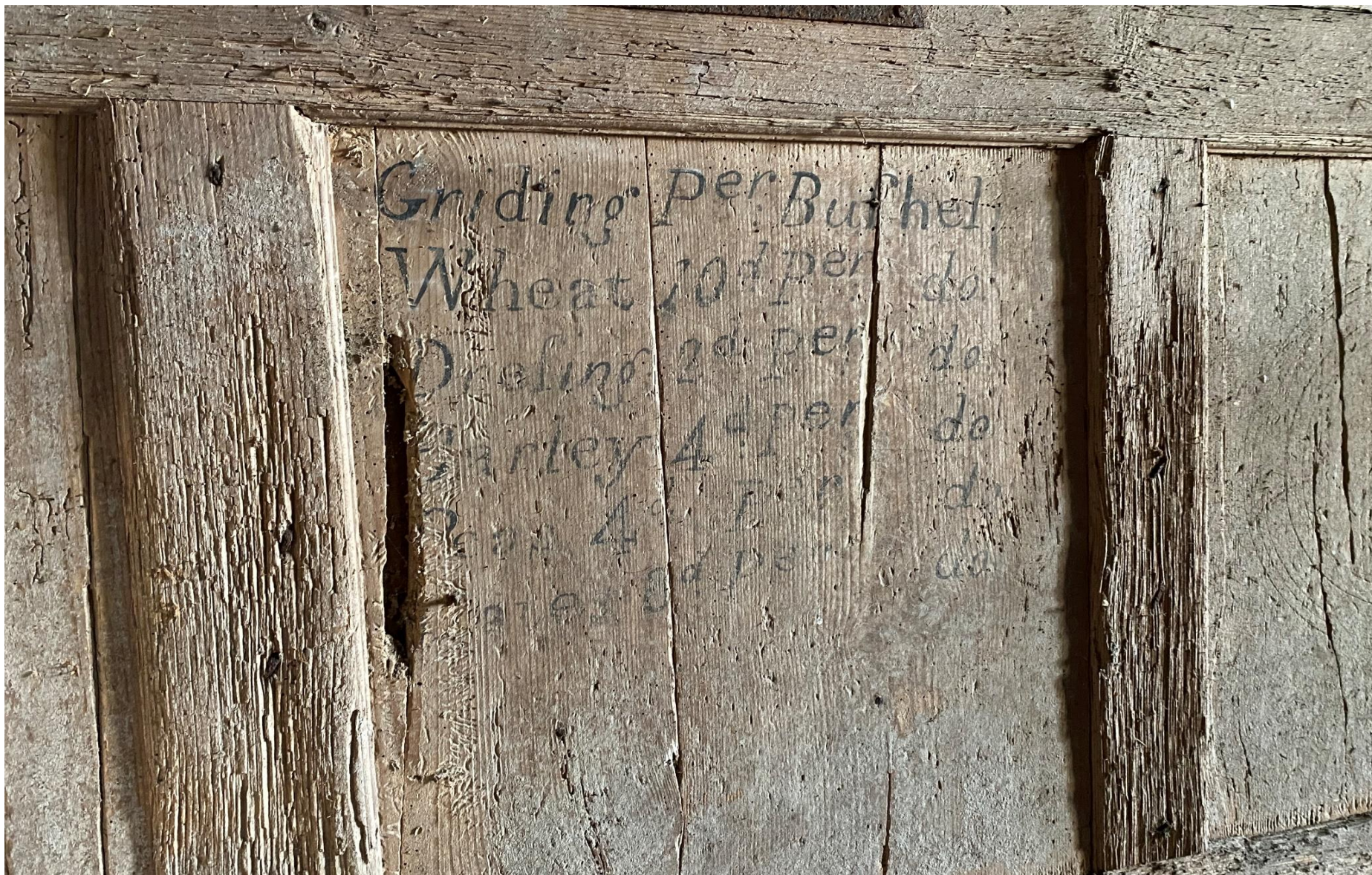


Figure 6 – Historically significant panel within the mill, listing the price for grinding certain grains.



Figure 7 – Retained inner workings within the mill, adding much historic significance to the Site.



Figure 8 - Retained inner workings within the mill, adding much historic significance to the Site.



Figure 9 - Retained inner workings within the mill, adding much historic significance to the Site.



Figure 10 – North-west elevation of the Site. This elevation features the historically significant waterwheel.



Figure 11 – Further view of the north-west elevation. The proposal looks to tidy the area around the wheel and reinforce the structure, revealing significance.



Figure 12 – Extension to the north-east side of the Site. Whilst this appears to be of a later phase, historic photos show it must have been present at the time of listing (Figures 7 – 10).



Figure 13 - Extension to the north-east side of the Site. Alternative proposal suggested by local authority concerned extending from this extension. This would result in harm to significance and pose risks from flooding to the new development (6.10 & Figure 6).



Figure 14 - Further view of the north-west elevation, waterwheel is more visible.



Figure 15 – Viewing the Site from the access road, to the north-west of the Site.



Figure 16 – Viewing out from the Site, towards the west. Extension to existing property which is similar to the proposed is noted.



Figure 17 – Viewing the Site from the south-west.



Figure 24 – Viewing of north-east elevation from garden now hedges/trees have been cut



Figure 25 – Viewing of north-east elevation from garden now hedges/trees have been cut



Figure 27 – Viewing from inside on to garden (north-east elevation) showing cut hedges/trees



Figure 28 – Internal view of compact kitchen/window with breakfast bar (no dining room)



Figure 29 – Internal view of kitchen/sink



Figure 30 – Internal view of kitchen/breakfast bar



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