



**HISTORIC BUILDING RECORDING AT HILL GREEN
FARMHOUSE, STOCKBURY, MAIDSTONE,
KENT**

Date of report: 30th June 2023

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Front cover: Aerial photograph of the site (2022)

Appendix 1. Historic Building Survey Summary

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In June 2023 Dr Paul Wilkinson of SWAT Archaeology carried out a historic building recording of Hill Green Farmhouse, Stockbury, Kent (Figures 1-3). The building is presently unoccupied following a fire (Plates 1-16).

Following the fire, the building is undergoing renovations and rebuilding.

1.2 Planning background

The site has planning permission from Maidstone Borough Council (dated 27th April 2023) for: Listed Building Consent for removal of existing fire damaged roof structure and erection of replacement roof.

The Local Planning Authority's planning reference for the proposal is 22/504882/LBC.

The Conservation Officer at Maidstone Borough Council has advised that a programme of building recording be undertaken in advance of any site development or demolition works (Planning Condition 7):

Prior to any further works being undertaken, a full building recording (in accordance with Historic England's Guidance - <https://historicengland.org.uk/images/books/publications/understanding-historic-buildings/heag099-understanding-historic-buildings/> to level 3 shall be undertaken to ensure that a record of the existing building is made, and submitted to, and subsequently approved in writing by, the local planning authority. Where the recording is ongoing during the works, a draft copy is to be issued.

A copy of the final Building Recording should be submitted to the HER and placed on OASIS (<https://oasis.ac.uk/>) within one month of it being approved in writing by the local planning authority;

Reason: To allow for future research and understanding of the property. To ensure features of historic and architectural interest are properly examined and recorded

1.3 The building recording has been conducted in one phase:

Phase 1: Recording of the barns as existing to Level 3 (Plates 1-16).

1.3.1 This survey work and specification has been carried out in accordance with a Level 3 survey as detailed in the Historic England volume 'Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice' (2016) and the Chartered Institute for Archaeology- Standard and Guidance for the Archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures (2017)) and the KCC Historic Building Recording Requirements (undated and attached as Appendix A to the initial WSI).

1.3.2 In summary the work will consist of a descriptive report accompanied by digital images and site and building plans.

1.3.3 The recording of these heritage assets has followed the available professional standards and guidance such as the Chartered Institute for Archaeology 'Standards and Guidance'. The most commonly referred to guidance is the Royal Commission of the Historical Monuments of England (RCHME) advice note 'Recording Historic Buildings' (1996). This guidance has been revised and expanded by Historic England in their publication 'Understanding Historic Buildings – a guide to good recording practice' (2016). These documents define four levels of building recording (see below) that are frequently used in planning permission and listed building consent conditions.

1.3.4 Level 3 is an analytical record, and will comprise an introductory description followed by a systematic account of the buildings origins, development and use including measured plans. The principal elements of the survey involved the creation of a record and description of the historic fabric of the buildings together with an analysis and interpretation of the site and historic development. In summary the report consists of a Level 3 descriptive report of the buildings accompanied by digital photographs and annotated measured plans.

2.0 HISTORICAL/ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Hill Green Farmhouse, is a Grade II Listed 16th Century farmhouse with a slightly later wing and located on the periphery of Stockbury. It is within the district of Maidstone Borough Council and within the Parish of Stockbury (Figures 1). The property is a large detached historic listed dwelling over two and three storeys and is generally constructed with an oak-framed

superstructure to the original property. The fire had mainly affected the roof structure and destroyed most of the interior through water damage.

2.2 The site is located in a remote hamlet between Stockbury and Hill Green. The Grade II listed Farmhouse (TQ 86 SW 85) forms a group with a number of other farm buildings as part of a Post Medieval Farmstead (MKE85015) recorded as a loose courtyard plan farmstead with buildings to three sides of the yard. Other records in the group include a Grade II Listed Cart Shed circa 20 yards east of Hill Green Farmhouse (TQ 86 SW 77) believed to be 18th or 19th century and a 18th century five bay timber framed weatherboarded Grade II Barn circa 25 yards south east of Hill Green Farmhouse (TQ 86 SW 95). There is little else by way of archaeological sites are identified in the vicinity on the KCCHER database.

2.3 The British Geological Society (BGS 1995) shows that the PDA (Proposed Development Area) is set on bedrock geology of SEAFORD CHALK FORMATION – CHALK. Superficial deposits are recorded as Clay-With-Flints Formation - Clay, Silt, Sand and Gravel. The NGR to centre of site is 583171 162076 and the OD height is about 111m in the centre of the site.

2.4 The Conservation Officer's commented (06/12/22) that:

'the site relates to the Grade II listed Hill Green Farmhouse which has recently suffered fire damage. The site relates to a farmhouse dating from the late C16 or early C17 with a slightly later rear wing. Timber framed with traditional vernacular materials and a continuous jetty; a feature common in the C16; the building has a lobby entry plan. The close studding on the front indicates it was of high status. The planning history indicates a bathroom extension was added in 1983, the site visit some of the ceilings are of modern fabric. Despite modern extensions and alterations, the building is of high architectural and historic interest. The buildings significance is derived from its architectural features, materials, design, and age.There is a very clearly a need to rebuild the property as soon as possible and the proposal would closely match the existing in terms of form. The public benefit is the reuse of this important Grade II listed building. Additional information will be required but this can be added by way of condition.'

2.6 Statutory Designation

Monument Details for the site are as follows:

HER Number: TQ 86 SW 85

National Listing: (II) 1116525

NGR: TQ 83168 62080

Description: Farmhouse. Late C16 or early C17 with slightly later rear wing. Painted brick ground floor to front elevation and left gable end, timber-framed with plaster infilling to rest with plain tile roof. Lobby entry plan with one room either side of stack bay. 2 storeys on flint and brick plinth with continuous jetty to front elevation, returning along left gable end with dragon post. Close studding to front elevation on first floor, broadly-spaced studding with tension braces to gable ends. Roof hipped, with gablet both ends. Brick ridge stack slightly off-centre to right. Regular 2-window front of 2-light casements. Panelled door. Rear wing recessed to left. Brick ground floor, broadly spaced studding with plaster infilling above. 2-storey rear (stair?) turret projects close to angle with main range; brick ground floor, timber-framed first floor with hipped plain tile roof.

2.7 Significance of the Buildings

The significance of the buildings is from its architectural features of a potentially high status timber framed building with traditional vernacular materials and continuous jetty forming part of a Farmstead group illustrating the development of an 16th century farmstead with outbuildings built specifically for farming.

2.8 Setting

The PDA (Proposed Development Area) comprises of the farmhouse (Figure 1). (AP 1-5).

2.9 Historic Mapping Background

2.9.1 The earliest map appears to show the farmhouse is in the 1767 Andrews and Dury (MAP 1). Where the farmhouse can be seen on the southern side of Hill Green Road. The 1797 Ordnance Surveyors Drawing (MAP 2) shows an 'L' shaped property (red) with two other outbuildings nearby (black) also confirmed on the Mudge map of 1801 (MAP 3).

2.9.2 The Tithe map of 1840 (MAP 4) shows greater detail in the footprint of the house, which appears to be more 'T' shaped. The northern elevation appears wider than the southern part of the building which is also seen on the 1870 Historical OS map (MAP 5). Viewing the 1895 historical OS map (MAP 6), this shows that the entrance appears to be to the northern elevation with a path leading towards it. In addition, at the northern end of the eastern elevation there appears to be an additional smaller structure. This map also suggests the farmhouse was extended at the southern end.

2.9.3 The aerial photographs throughout the 20th century shows that a porch was later added at the southern end of the eastern elevation and the structure seen at the northern elevation no longer appears in place. By 1990, the aerial photograph shows a single storey extension along the western side of the building and along the southern end.

3. DESCRIPTION OF THE BUILDINGS

3.1 Farmhouse.

The farmhouse is a large detached historic listed dwelling over two and three storeys, and is broadly 'T'-shaped on plan. A full survey could not be undertaken due to safety reasons and the ongoing works to the property and access to the ground and first floor was not possible.

The northern end of the farmhouse represents the earliest part of the building and set on a flint and brick base and is two storeys. It is timber framed brick built, painted white on the ground floor and with continuous jetty around. The first floor is timber framed with plaster infill. There was a Kent peg tiled roof and a large chimney stack and the roof hipped. Panelled door for entrance through the northern elevation remains with a bay either side.

The rear wing believed to be slightly later although certainly historical mapping suggests it was in existence by 1797. Rear wing to the left, with a modern porch at the southern end on the eastern side. This too is timber framed with a brick built ground floor with plaster infilling on the first floor. In the recessed angled corner on the western side between the rear extension and northern elevation is a two storey square extension that is historically considered to be a possible stair turret (Site Photo 1). Also along the western elevation is a single storey modern extension that also wraps around the southern end of the property

The property is generally constructed with historic traditional materials throughout incorporating an original Oak-framed superstructure with Oak infill wall panels between the

Oak framing. The pitched roof was generally formed with traditional Oak trusses / framing and Oak rafters. A fairly recent small two-storey side extension has been added to the left-hand side of the property. Two large brick chimneys extend above the roof structure at either end of the property.

The entire roof structure was consumed by the fire. The chimneys survived and at the time of the survey had been cleaned from the smoke damage (Site Photo 2). The chimney at the northern end of the property is the larger of the two and is likely the earliest. Both chimneys suffered structural issues and has been partial rebuilt following works to maintain its stability.

It was observed that a number of steel tie rods had previously been installed across the property at wall plate level above the first floor (Photo 8), with the tie rods fixed to longitudinal steel angles which were installed across the feet of the rafters. These suggest that the property has had some issues with roof spread / lateral displacement of walls in the past, and that remedial measures were undertaken to try and rectify this.

4.0 PARAMETERS

4.1 The photographic survey was conducted using digital photography (Photo locations 1, 2) and a site survey undertaken by Dr Paul Wilkinson MifA on 19th June 2023.

4.2 This work did not include any investigation of below ground archaeology. Such work is administered separately by SWAT Archaeology to a WSI prepared for the Local Planning Authority.

Paul Wilkinson PhD., MCifA., FRSA. Member IHBC



5. References

Historic England, 2017 *Understanding Historic Buildings: a guide to good recording practice.*

SWAT Archaeology 2023 *Specification for an Archaeological Building Recording at Hill Green Farm, Stockbury, Kent*

Appendix 1 HISTORIC BUILDINGS SURVEY:

Summary Sheet

Property Name Hill Green Farmhouse	Address Hill Green Road	Building Name
Property/ Building Reference	OS Grid Reference TQ 83171 62075	Surveyor/Date of Survey SWAT Archaeology June 2023
Category Residential House	Original Use Farmhouse	Current Use Undergoing restoration following a fire
Date(s) of Construction The present building dates from late 16 th / early 17 th century	Statutory Designation Grade II	HER Reference TQ 86 SW 85
Walling Materials Wall construction is brick on ground floor with timber and plaster infill above	Roofing Materials Was timber and Kent peg tile (undergoing replacement)	Flooring Materials Not known
Description: Hoo Farm buildings 1 & 2 are a survival from the original farm buildings of Hoo Farm		
Architectural/Historic Significance: The building is significant as part of Kent farming history		Landscape Significance: No significance
Notes/Qualifications Regarding Survey: The survey was undertaken whilst the buildings was undergoing restoration. Inside access		
Additional Information Sources for this Building (s):		
Copies & CDs of this report held at: SWAT Archaeology, The Office, School Farm Oast, Faversham		

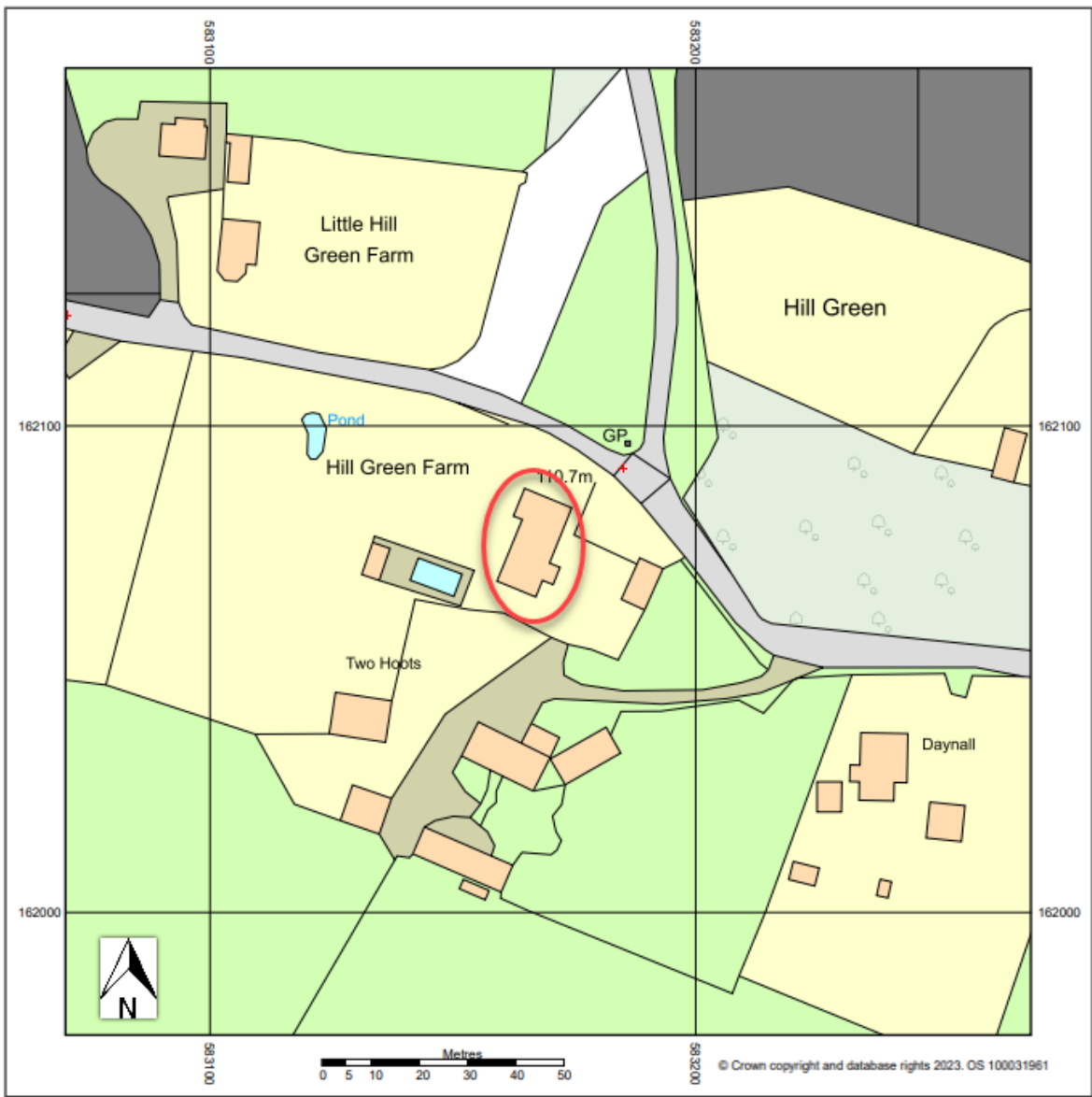
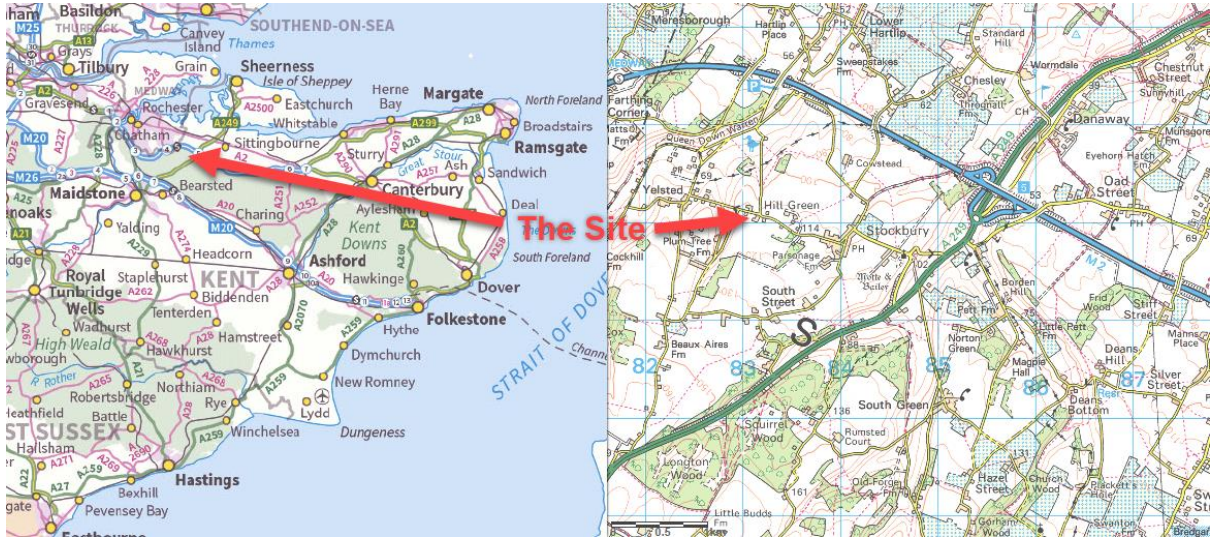


Figure 1. OS site plan



Figure 2. Proposed Development



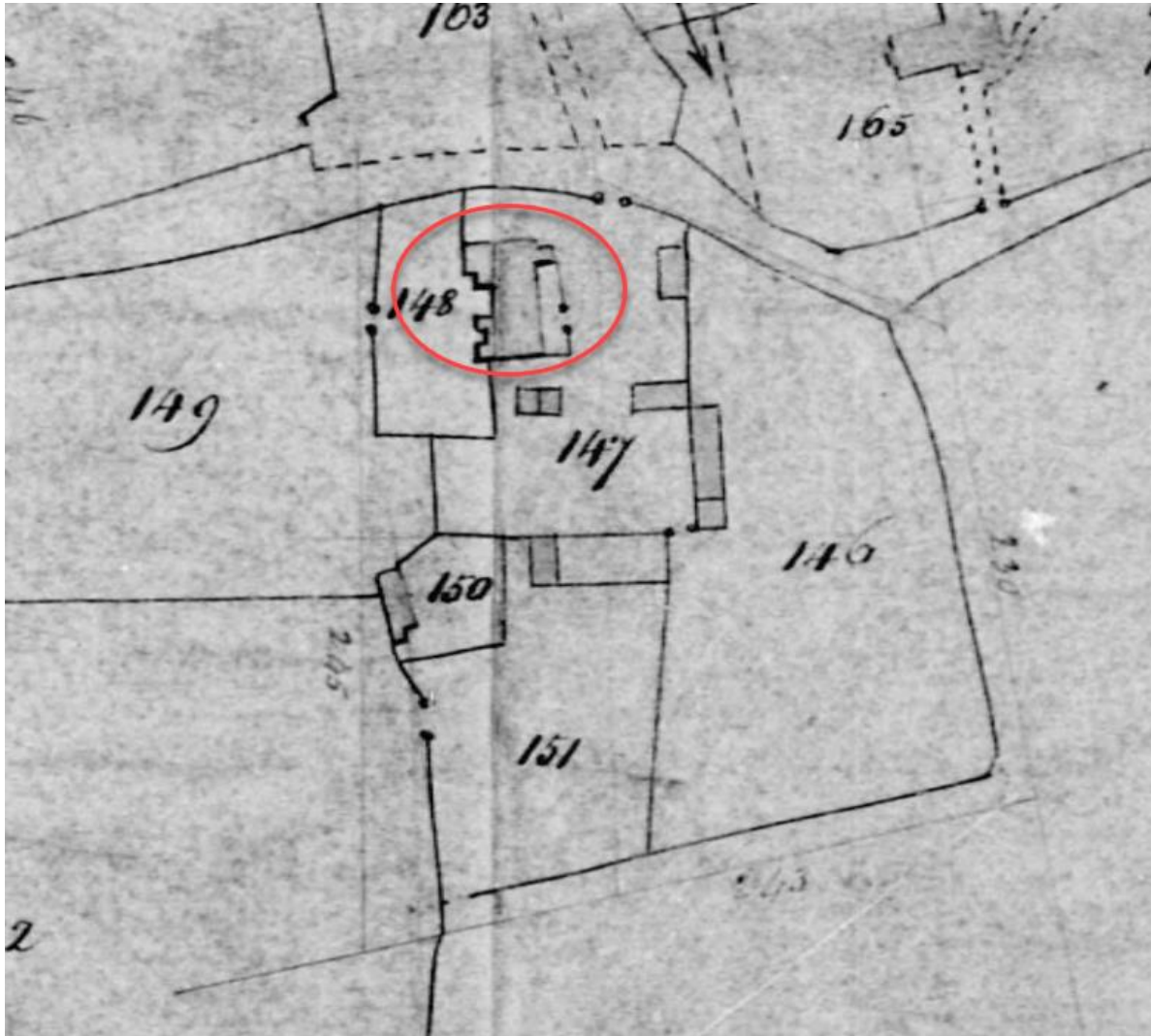
MAP1. Andrews & Dury, 1767



MAP 2. OSSD map of 1797



MAP 3. 1801 Mudge map



MAP 4. 1840 Stockbury Tithe map



MAP 5. 1870 OS map



MAP 6. 1895 OS map



MAP 7. 1947 OS map



AP 1. 1946 aerial photograph (Google Earth)



AP 2. 1960 aerial photograph (Google Earth)



AP 3. 1990 aerial photograph (Google Earth)



AP 4. 2003 aerial photograph (Google Earth)



AP 5. 2020 aerial photograph (Google Earth)



Historical Site Photo 1. Northern Elevation May 2021



Historical Site Photo 2. Eastern Elevation May 2021



Site Photo 1. Western elevation



Site Photo 2. Northern Chimney Stack



Site Photo 3. Rafters, Looking north



Site Photo 4. Detail of exposed building side.



Site Photo 5. Evidence by chimney of lathe and plaster.



Site Photo 6. View across roof floor



Site Photo 7. New roof on rear extension showing rear chimney



Site Photo 8. Showing historical staples



Site photo 9. Ground floor (looking SE)



Site photo 10. Ground floor (looking west)



Site photo 11. Kitchen area (looking west)



Site photo 12. Hall area (Looking NE)



Site photo 13. Staircase area (Looking north)



Site photo 14. Kitchen area (Looking south)



Site photo 15. Area of ground floor with fire damage (Looking west)