

Appellant's Statement of Case: Heritage

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Land East of Posbrook Lane, Titchfield

On behalf of Foreman Homes

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Qualifications and experience

- 1.1 I am Ignus Froneman, Director at Cogent Heritage, an independent heritage consultancy that I established in August 2019. In the 9 years before establishing Cogent Heritage, I was a Director at Heritage Collective UK Limited (trading as Heritage Collective) and its subsidiaries. Before that, I was an Associate Director at CgMs Consulting (now part of RPS). I have worked on a wide range of heritage-related projects throughout the United Kingdom, predominantly (but not exclusively) for private sector clients.
- 1.2 I hold a degree in architecture; I am an Associate member of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (ACIfA) and a member of the Institute of Historic Building Conservation (IHBC).
- 1.3 Over the last 18 years I have specialised in the historic environment, both in terms of understanding/analysing physical fabric, and in terms of policy application, specifically by assessing impacts, providing advice, and supporting development proposals. My experience includes a diverse range of cases relating to the assessment of physical changes to, and development affecting all manner of heritage assets, and their settings.
- 1.4 I have undertaken numerous impact assessments where I have considered the impacts of new development on the historic environment (dealing with physical impacts, setting, townscape, views, and inter-visibility), including dealing with farms, rural contexts and urban extensions.
- 1.5 I have provided expert evidence at appeals, including public inquiries, on behalf of both Appellants and local planning authorities. I am presently instructed by the London Borough of Tower Hamlets to act as a heritage expert witness, having previously represented that authority successfully on several occasions.
- 1.6 I understand my duties as an expert witness; to give independent and objective evidence on matters within my expertise, based on my own independent opinion and uninfluenced by the instructing party. I confirm that I have stated the facts and matters on which my opinion is based, and that I have not omitted to mention facts or matters that could detract from my conclusions.
- 1.7 I believe that the facts stated within this Heritage Statement of Case are true and that the opinions I have expressed are correct. I have drawn attention to any matters

where I consider I lack sufficient information to reach anything other than a provisional conclusion. I will continue to comply with my duties as an expert witness. I have adhered to the standards and duties of the professional bodies I am a member of, and will continue to adhere to those standards and duties.

My involvement and background to the heritage case

- 1.8 My involvement in this case started when I was asked to represent the Appellant at the recent Public Inquiry (held in November 2018, decision date 12 April 2019, Appeal Ref: APP/A1720/W/18/3199119), which involved a larger scheme of up to 150 dwellings. Following dismissal of that appeal, I was retained by the Appellant and asked to advise on a new, reduced scheme with a revised illustrative masterplan that would reduce or remove the heritage harm found by the previous Inspector in relation to the larger scheme (at this time, I was still at my former company).
- 1.9 A revised illustrative masterplan for the new scheme was produced and submitted in July 2019 to Historic England for pre-application advice. I return to Historic England's pre-application advice (**Appendix 11**) in my assessment, although in short the comments were broadly positive and suggested a change to the landscape buffer as was proposed then, which is reflected in the current appeal scheme. By this time, I had changed companies, and I supported the application with a Heritage Statement under the banner of my new company, Cogent Heritage.
- 1.10 Based on my previous involvement, I was able to confirm that I would act as the Appellant's heritage witness when it became clear that Fareham Borough Council was minded to refuse the application. Following my previous involvement, I again visited the site in June 2020, at which time I took drone photos of the farmstead at Great Posbrook. I understand that there was a fire that affected part of the eastern boundary of Great Posbrook in July 2020, but I have not inspected this area.

The key heritage issues

- 1.11 The Officer's Committee Report for the application (Dated 24/06/2020, Appendices SB & 7 of Mr Brown's Statement of case) states at paragraph 8.55 that Titchfield and the former farmstead at Great Posbrook, which contains two grade II* listed buildings (the former farmhouse and the barn) and also locally listed buildings (non-designated heritage assets), would remain separated by a gap. However, it is then said that the appeal scheme would urbanise part of the rural hinterland of the listed buildings and as a result it would be 'harder to understand' that Great Posbrook was originally a separate farmstead, surrounded by open farmland. This would 'harm the appreciation of the significance of the listed farmhouse and barn as being part of an ancient farmstead'.

- 1.12 Paragraph 8.56 of the Committee Report states that the appeal scheme would therefore cause less than substantial harm, at the lower end of the spectrum, to the listed farmhouse and barn.
- 1.13 Paragraph 8.56 of the Committee Report states that "*Titchfield and the farmstead would remain separated by a minimum gap of around 28.5 metres. This is a relatively narrow gap [...]*". In fact, that is incorrect. At its narrowest point, the gap as proposed is, in fact, double that (c. 56m). This indicates to me that the basis of the Council's assertion of harm appears to have been mis founded.
- 1.14 According to paragraph 8.57 of the Committee Report, the proposed development would not harm the Titchfield Conservation Area nor the locally listed buildings within the Great Posbrook farmstead.
- 1.15 I consider that the landscaped buffer to the south of the appeal scheme, as per the illustrative masterplan, would soften the harsh urban edge of Titchfield where this is juxtaposed with the listed farmstead in views from the south, and that this would be an enhancement (this was recognised in Historic England's pre-application response, but omitted from their response to the application).
- 1.16 In light of the above, I consider the key issues to be:
- i. whether the appeal scheme would cause any harm to the significance of the listed buildings;
 - ii. whether the appeal scheme would enhance the significance of the listed buildings; and
 - iii. if any harm would be caused, the degree of that harm.

Structure and Scope of my Appeal Statement

- 1.17 I focus my evidence on the potential effects of the appeal scheme on the significance of the grade II* listed buildings at the former farmstead of Great Posbrook Farm: the former farmhouse (Great Posbrook), now converted to three dwellings; and the southern barn, which is now used for storage and shared between residents of the small housing development at Great Posbrook.
- 1.18 The remainder of my Heritage Statement of Case is structured as follows:
- Section 2:** In this section I assess the heritage significance, or special interest, of the listed buildings at the former farmstead of Great Posbrook Farm.
- Section 3:** In this section I assess the contribution of their setting to their significance, including the specific contribution of the appeal site.

Section 4: In this section I briefly discuss the previous Inspector's decision, and how the present scheme was adapted in response to that, to avoid/minimise any harm.

Section 5: In this section I assess the effect of the appeal scheme on the heritage significance, or special interest, of the listed buildings.

Section 6: Summary and conclusions.

1.19 I have included in my appendices photos taken on my site visits. The photos were taken with a compact digital camera and they have not been digitally altered, aside from cropping superfluous areas of sky and/or foreground. On my last site visit I have used a drone to take elevated views, and again I have not altered these images, aside from cropping them. I have also included in my appendices historic maps and images to assist in interpreting the evolution of the setting of the listed buildings; the research is intended to be informative, but it is not intended to be exhaustive.

2.0 THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE LISTED BUILDINGS

Introduction

2.1 The following section of my Proof deals with the significance of the listed buildings at the former farmstead of Great Posbrook Farm (i.e. Great Posbrook and the southern barn at Great Posbrook Farm). I begin this section by first considering the historic context of the buildings, by reference to historic documents and maps, sourced and collated as part of my previous Proof and supplemented by additional readily available information.

Historic background

2.2 According to the *Victoria County History* of 1908¹ Posbrook (also Passebroc or Postbrook) is not mentioned in Domesday Book, and very little is known of its early history. It appears to have been held by members of the Passebroc family in the early part of the 13th century, and in 1243–4 it was acquired either by purchase or grant from William de Setteville by Isaac, abbot of Titchfield. A grant of free warren in Posbrook was made to the abbey in the reign of Edward I, and the manor remained in the possession of the monastery until the Dissolution in 1538, when it was granted to Thomas Wriothesley as part of the abbey estates, and from this date the descent of the manor is the same as that of Titchfield.

2.3 The 'Manor of Posbrooke' is recorded in a Survey book, dated 1632, held at the Hampshire Record Office (Ref. No. 5M53/768). The Survey book records manorial rentals and valuations for the Hampshire manors of Titchfield (including Titchfield Place and demesne, St Margaret's, the Great Park and Whittiey Park), Posbrook (including Posbrooke Farm), amongst many others. The records include acreage, tenure, field names, a valuation and details of timber, but although the farm is listed the document does not provide useful details about the farm buildings or the land associated with 'Posbrooke Farm' at that time.

2.4 The 1838 Titchfield Tithe map shows the arrangement of buildings at Great Posbrook Farm at that time. The extract of the tithe map at **Appendix 2.1** is orientated and scaled for ease of comparison with the Ordnance Survey maps at **Appendix 2.2** onwards. The details of the land parcels around the farmstead, as per the tithe apportionment, is tabulated below.

¹ 'Parishes: Titchfield', in *A History of the County of Hampshire: Volume 3*, ed. William Page (London, 1908), pp. 220-233. British History Online <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/hants/vol3/pp220-233>

Plot	Name and Description	State of Cultivation	Landowner	Occupier
1692	Moor Field	Arable	Henry Peter Delmé Esq	James Hewett
1694	Barn Field	Arable	Henry Peter Delmé Esq	James Hewett
1695	Great Posbrook Farm and House	-	Henry Peter Delmé Esq	James Hewett
1696	Great Posbrook Farm Buildings and Yards	-	Henry Peter Delmé Esq	James Hewett
1697	Lane	-	Henry Peter Delmé Esq	James Hewett
1698	Thislands	Meadow	Henry Peter Delmé Esq	James Hewett
1699	Lower Thislands and Row	Arable and Wood	Henry Peter Delmé Esq	James Hewett
1700	Bell Field Coppice	Wood	Henry Peter Delmé Esq	James Hewett
1701	Upper Thislands	Arable	Henry Peter Delmé Esq	James Hewett
1702	Upper Bell Field	Arable	Henry Peter Delmé Esq	James Hewett

2.5 The tithe map indicates that the farmstead was approached from the south, off (what is now) Posbrook Lane. There was an access roughly opposite the present-day access to Great Posbrook Farm (i.e. the present-day farm to the west of Posbrook Lane). At the time of the tithe map the workers' cottages on the west side of Posbrook Lane did not exist. It is possible to make a distinction on the map between the farmhouse and its garden, and the working farmstead. That is also reflected on the land parcel numbering, and the descriptions of these in the apportionment, with parcel 1695 being "*Great Posbrook Farm and House*" and parcel 1696 being "*Great Posbrook Farm Buildings and Yards*".

2.6 The gardens to the house, at this time, were located to the north, east and south of it. The southern garden did not, however, extend all the way to the southern boundary of the farmstead, as it does today. There was a barn-like range, almost as long as the southern barn, in this area, and also a pond (possibly the remnant of a medieval fishpond). This area connected to a track that extended eastwards (now the track along the southern boundary of the appeal site). There was a courtyard to the north of the southern barn, which at this time had two midstreys, judging from the footprint on the tithe map. The farmyard was divided into different parcels, with a loose collection of outbuildings scattered to the west of the farmhouse.

- 2.7 An Indenture, dated 20 August 1857, between James Hewett the elder (yeoman) and Henry Peter Delmé and James Hewett the younger, relating to Great Posbrook Farm and held at the Hampshire Record Office, describes the farm as a 'messuage and tenement farm' consisting of a 'farmhouse; offices; stables; cowhouses; granaries; barns and other buildings' along with the 'several closes, pieces or parcels of arable meadow pasture and woodland'. This made up 540 acres, two roods and seven perches.
- 2.8 A counterpart lease of the same date lists the fields (as numbered on the 1838 tithe map) that were at that time associated with Great Posbrook Farm. The tithe map is replicated at **Appendix 5**, with the land associated with the ownership and lease of Great Posbrook Farm, as per the 1857 Indenture, highlighted in red (Note: the tithe map at Appendix 5 has not been rotated, and north is on the right side of the map). Another Indenture of 9 July 1860 describes the farm similarly.
- 2.9 The book *Titchfield: A History* Edited by George Watts and published by the Titchfield History Society (2008), notes the inscription on the tombstone slab of the Delmé family:
- "Sacred to the memory of Mary, the wife of Henry Peter Delmé Esq of Cams Hall in this county. Also H P Delmé Lord of the Manors of Titchfield, Segensworth, Crofton, Newlands, Lee Marks, Lee Britten, Chark, Mirabel and Cams Oysell in the County of Hampshire and former High Sheriff of the county who died at Cams Hall at the age of 89 years, in 1883 also [...] Seymour Robert Delmé Lord of the Manors of [...] Died in March 1894."*
- 2.10 The book also chronicles the history of the Delmé family, a summary of which is included here. Despite the Delmé family's seat having been Cams Hall in Fareham for many years (since c. 1780), the family had a connection with Titchfield, with Peter Delmé having purchased the manor of Titchfield in 1741, and it having remained in the family. The Henry Peter Delmé who is mentioned in the 1857 Indenture, inherited the family estate in 1815. Following his death in 1883, he was succeeded by his brother, Seymour Robert Delmé, the last of the male heirs of the Delmé family. Following his death, in 1894, the estate was divided according to his will.
- 2.11 The Hewett family, who leased Great Posbrook Farm from Henry Peter Delmé in the 1857 Indenture, also has a long history in Titchfield. According to the book *Titchfield: A Place in History* published by Countryside Books for the Titchfield History Society (1989), the Hewett family in Titchfield can probably be traced back to a Richard Huyht, who was recorded in a rental of 1377-8.

- 2.12 According to the book, in 1762 John Delmé, the Lord of the Manor, had leased Great Posbrook Farm to a John Hewett, yeoman. Upon John's death in 1766, his widow (Jane) left the contents of Posbrook to her son Robert Hewett; he had a son, also Robert Hewett, in 1782.
- 2.13 By the 1851 census, James Hewett, who is described as a grandson of John Hewett, was living at Posbrook with his children, including James Hewett the younger, who was 20 at the time, and six servants. James Hewett the elder at this time farmed 700 acres and employed 24 labourers and 7 boys. Whilst Great Posbrook was rented, the Hewetts also owned Little Posbrook and various other parcels of land.
- 2.14 It is therefore evident that Great Posbrook Farm was historically associated with the considerable estate of the Delmé family since the 18th century and leased by the Hewett family as part of larger farm operation.
- 2.15 The Ordnance Survey map of 1881 (**Appendix 2.2**) records considerable change to the farmstead at Great Posbrook in comparison with the tithe map. There was a new approach to the farmhouse, from the north-west, where it still is today. It was planted with trees either side and it led to a forecourt to the north of the house; there were gardens to the north, planted with trees and with paths in between these, laid out in a loose grid. The farmstead was well-defined by coniferous boundary trees to the north and trees to the east, and the south of the garden.
- 2.16 There were greenhouses immediately to the north-east of the house, and others further north, probably in what was then part of the working/kitchen garden. The garden to the east and south of the house was more open, and crossed by east-west and north-south paths. By now the garden extended nearly to the southern boundary of the farmstead, and included a large pond. The garden curved around the pond, where it was well-planted with boundary trees. A new house is shown to the north-west of the farmhouse, possibly a foreman or gardener's cottage; it had its own access track off Posbrook Lane, parallel with that of the main house, and there was a series of greenhouses to the north of it.
- 2.17 A path to the south of the farmstead connected Posbrook Lane with the track that extended eastwards from the farmstead. This would have been necessary, because the eastern part of the farmyard, as shown on the tithe map, had been subsumed in the domestic garden. The farmyard, to the west and south-west of the house, had evolved since the tithe map, with the removal of some structures and the addition of others. A secondary entrance to the farmyard, off Posbrook Lane, had also been created to the north of the one shown on the tithe map, which by this time is no longer

shown as an access. The southern barn had been extended at both ends, and building ranges had been added to the north and south of it.

- 2.18 The 1897 Ordnance Survey map (**Appendix 2.3**) shows a broadly similar configuration, though with less greenhouses and trees to the north/north-west of the farmhouse and with the secondary access off Posbrook Lane apparently now disused.
- 2.19 The development of three pairs of semi-detached houses to the west of Posbrook Lane occurred between the 1897 and 1907 Ordnance Survey maps (**Appendix 2.3 & 2.4**), on land that was historically part of Great Posbrook Farm. A survey report of Great Posbrook, dated 1988 or 1991 (the report bears both dates) states that two of these were then occupied by farm workers; they were probably originally built as workers' cottages. The 1932 Ordnance Survey map (**Appendix 2.5**) shows only very minor changes to the farmstead.
- 2.20 An aerial photo, taken on 7 October 1946 (**Appendix 3.1**), shows the farmstead in some detail on that date. The southern barn appears to still have had two midstreys by this time. It is possible to see that the working farmyard was located in the area to the west and south-west of the farmhouse, criss-crossed by access tracks that connected to the track that extended eastwards of from the farmstead (now the southern boundary of the appeal site). A number of small buildings had been added to the farmyard. The photo was taken on a sunny day and the shadows cast by the trees along the north of the farmstead show that they were relatively tall (approximately the height of a two storey building). The density of the shadows also suggest that the trees were evergreen but, in any event, their canopies were certainly dense. The boundary trees extended along the north and east of the farmstead, where at this time there were the kitchen and domestic gardens.
- 2.21 There was a dense cluster of trees along the south of the garden, which had the same rounded shape as on the 1932 Ordnance Survey map (**Appendix 2.5**). The access track to the south of the farmstead still extended to the east. In the wider context, the creation of the road layout for the Bellfield development along the south of Titchfield can be seen, though the plots had not been demarcated and no development had taken place.
- 2.22 The aerial photo taken on 18 April 1951 (**Appendix 3.2**) shows the farmstead with a similar layout, though by this time with a few structures absent. It looks as though the southern barn still had two midstreys at this time. The photo was again taken on a sunny day, but this time the shadows cast by the eastern boundary trees to the farmstead is the clearest. These again show that they were relatively tall trees,

approximately the height of a two storey building, and they cast a solid shadow. In the wider context, the Bellfield development can be seen, though the land to the east of it had not yet been developed and remained a block of woodland.

- 2.23 The aerial photo taken on 23 March 1959 (**Appendix 3.3**) shows a similar layout to the farmstead, though it is grainy and less clearly detailed. It looks as though only the eastern of two the two midstreys to the southern barn had remained. The block of woodland to the east of Bellfield had been removed and the roads of the Ransome Close and Hewett Road development had been laid out.
- 2.24 The 1964-5 Ordnance Survey map (**Appendix 2.6**) records the farmstead broadly the same as the aerial photo taken on 23 March 1959 (**Appendix 3.3**). The post-war southern extension of Titchfield, at Bellfield, Ransome Close and Hewett Road, to the north-east of Great Posbrook Farm can be seen.
- 2.25 The aerial photo taken on 16 July 1979 (**Appendix 3.4**) shows the development of large sheds in the farmyard, with the remainder of the farmstead similar as before. Only the eastern midstrey to the southern barn was now still present. There are no clear shadows, but it is apparent that the farmstead was well-enclosed by trees along the north and east and part of the south.
- 2.26 The aforementioned survey report of Great Posbrook, dated 1988 or 1991, states that the barn had been damaged by a fire when the buildings on the east side of the yard were destroyed, and that the whole of the roof of the barn had been removed. The report contains photos, and a selection these are included at Appendix 4. One of these, at **Appendix 4.3**, is annotated to state that the roof of the barn was gale damaged. The report states that the easterly set of doors in the north elevation was no longer covered (presumably this means to say that the midstrey had gone) and the roof had been re-clad in corrugated aluminium sheeting. The report states that the original, listed farmhouse had been converted to three dwellings and a new farmhouse had been built on the west side of Posbrook Lane.
- 2.27 The buildings are numbered and labelled on the map and key at **Appendix 4.1**. The piggery and cartshed (**Appendix 4.2**) range was obviously dilapidated. The photo at **Appendix 4.3** shows the western end of the southern barn, and the farm buildings it stood in the context of it, with the new aluminium roof plain to see. The photo at **Appendix 4.4** shows the southern barn in the context of a working farmyard, as it was then. The report states that the barn was used for storing grain, and it had a grain drier inside.

- 2.28 The aerial photo taken on 4 May 1998 (**Appendix 3.5**) shows the addition of a large shed to the farmyard, but the other notable changes are:
- i. the new metal sheet roof of the barn;
 - ii. the removal of the eastern range to the barn; and
 - iii. the garden of the old farmhouse, which is now subdivided into three distinct sections, following subdivision of the house into three.
- 2.29 Historic England's archives at the National Monuments Record holds a series of photos of the farmstead and buildings, a selection of which is included at **Appendix 4.5-4.13**. These show the southern barn and other farmyard buildings derelict, and the farmyard is somewhat overgrown, indicating it had not been used as a working farmyard for some time. The barn was photographed internally, with a representative photo shown at **Appendix 4.13**.
- 2.30 The farmstead appears similar as before on the aerial photo taken on 19 July 2002 (**Appendix 3.6**), although on close inspection the vegetation growth on the roofs of the buildings in the farmyard can be seen, as can vegetation in the cracks in the hardstanding etc., indicating the farmyard would have been out of use.
- 2.31 On 27th February 2006, the enabling residential development at Great Posbrook Farm was approved (LPA Ref.: P/05/1663/FP). This scheme has effectively ended any real semblance of the former farmstead as that of a working farm, although the older farm buildings were retained and incorporated in the development, which was evidently designed to avoid or minimise impacts on the listed buildings. There is only limited information on the online application documents, although a report that accompanied the application² noted the following:
- i. The buildings have been vacant since 1995 and suffered from considerable deterioration.
 - ii. The adjoining farmland was sold by the previous owner of the farm in 1996.
 - iii. In July 2003, the listed southern barn was placed on the register of 'Buildings at Risk' by English Heritage (now Historic England).
 - iv. The southern barn was to be used in the enabling development for "*storage for cars and boats for residents of five of the new dwellings*".

² Report prepared by Bryan S Jezeph BA DipTP MRTPI FRICS FRSA of Bryan Jezeph Consultancy Ltd on behalf of Briercliffe Developments Ltd: Proposed Development at Great Posbrook Farm, Posbrook Lane, Titchfield, November 2005.

- v. According to the report (paragraph 6.9): "*The storage use [of the southern barn] is a practical solution which involves minimal intervention to the existing building and is thus in the spirit of retaining the old building in tact [sic]. The future maintenance of the building will be placed in a management agreement with the five prospective users.*"

2.32 An oblique aerial photo, taken on 16 May 2014 (**Appendix 3.7**) shows the enabling development in place, with a detail of the same photo at **Appendix 3.8**.

The significance of Great Posbrook

2.33 Great Posbrook was listed on 18 October 1955 (see **Appendix 1** for the full list description text). According to the list description, the entry has not been amended since then. I highlight the following from the list entry:

- i. Great Posbrook is a 16th century house, altered in the 19th century.
- ii. It consists of two parallel ranges (a northern and a southern range). The north range has exposed timber framing with herringbone brick nogging and very large external chimney stack.
- iii. The south facade has a symmetrical arrangement, with a central gable and projecting wings. The sash windows have late 19th century glazing.
- iv. The interior has panelling of 17th and 18th century date. The staircase is of 17th century date and there are exposed beams, as well as a massive wall post, also exposed inside.
- v. Great Posbrook forms a group with the eastern (now demolished) barn and the southern barn (listed in its own right), the store shed and small barn and with the cartshed and pigsties at Great Posbrook Farm (which are of local interest only).

2.34 Although the list description gives a 16th century date, the more recent Pevsner³ ascribes it to the 17th century:

"GREAT POSBROOK [farmhouse], off Posbrook Lane, 1/2 m. SW. An altered early C17 house, now subdivided. It originally had a very unusual form with a four-bay two-storey central part aligned N-S, gabled at the ends, and wings of equal height which abutted on the N side forming a T-plan. On the N side there is close studding with herringbone brickwork. A large chimneystack project from the original E wing on its N face, and flanking this on either side at first floor are frames of blocked windows.

³ *The Buildings of England Hampshire: South*, O'Brien, Bailey, Pevsner, (2018).

Each floor in the central part was originally undivided and there is no clear evidence if and how the large rooms were heated or used."

- 2.35 The significance of the farmhouse is described below in terms of the four strands of heritage significance as defined in Annex 2 of the NPPF. I highlight from the outset that, as a grade II* listed building, the farmhouse (and likewise the barn) fall within the top 8% of all listed buildings.
- 2.36 **Architectural interest:** As a house associated with retained 17th century fabric and with a very unusual original T-shaped form, Great Posbrook can lay claim to considerable architectural interest as a good, if unusual, example of English vernacular architecture. The retained internal features and structure adds to its significance, and its architectural interest extends to include these internal features (e.g. chimneypieces, panelling, joinery and other decorative features, etc.), and the residual historic plan form, were it exists, as well as the exterior.
- 2.37 As is commonly the case with houses of this age, the building has unsurprisingly undergone alterations over the centuries, but perhaps the greatest changes occurred when it was re-fronted, probably a late-Victorian intervention. It has of course also been subdivided into three residential units in more recent times.
- 2.38 Sometimes the history of alteration and adaptation of a building may in itself be of interest, or it may add to the interest of the building. In this case the Victorian 'upgrade' to Great Posbrook can be regarded as part of the evolutionary narrative of the house and the way in which it was upgraded to suit changing fashions, and in that sense it may be said to be of some interest. I was able to see the Victorian south frontage in 2018, and although it seems to be of reasonably good quality, it does not strike me as exceptional in the context of Victorian domestic and/or vernacular⁴ architecture. In my opinion this respectable Victorian re-fronting, with its strong order and symmetry (**Appendix 3.8**), has eroded and diluted much of the character of the earlier house, as a recognisably 17th century timber framed structure. The original T-shaped plan has also been changed through later additions.
- 2.39 **Historic interest:** As a house associated with a farmstead of medieval origins and associated with Titchfield Abbey (albeit with the house itself only of 17th century date,

⁴ In fact, I would describe the Victorian upgrade of the farmhouse as post-vernacular in the sense that it probably used mass-produced materials such as the bricks and the sash windows, rather than the truly vernacular architecture, which tends to be characterised by the use of locally sourced timber, or bricks dug and made on-site, etc., of which the earlier parts of the building are representative.

and post-Dissolution), Great Posbrook has clear historic associative interest. The manor of Posbrook remained in the possession of the monastery until the Dissolution in 1538 but that predates the present-day farmstead/buildings. There is at the very least a broad historic association between the farm and Titchfield Abbey, although no buildings from that time survive. Posbrook Farm was also associated with two prominent local families: the Delmés and the Hewetts. Regardless of the specific association with Titchfield Abbey, there is a general association in addition to the associative interest with these important local families.

- 2.40 Historic England's (formerly English Heritage's) *Conservation Principles*⁵ describes how historical value derives from the ways in which past events, people, and aspects of life can be connected to the present through a building or place (paragraph 39). Illustrative value illustrates aspects of history – the perception of a place as a link between the past and present – and has the power to aid interpretation of the past through making connections with, and providing insights into, past communities and their activities through shared experience of a place (paragraph 41). This explanation essentially summarises the historic value of Great Posbrook.
- 2.41 Great Posbrook has interest as a representative example of a high status farmhouse that has been adapted over the years. Although there are still remnants of the former farmstead, and of course the southern barn, today it stands in an immediate setting that has seen changes over the years, and in particular recent decades (e.g. **Appendix 8.1**). As noted in the list description, the building at the time of listing derived a degree of group value from the surviving historic farm buildings, though at least one of these has been lost and replaced with a new structure (the eastern barn) and the character of the former farmstead has changed to that of a more manicured, domestic small-scale housing development that incorporates retained historic farm structures or outbuildings.
- 2.42 The former farmhouse at Great Posbrook, despite having been subdivided, is still recognisable as a historically significant, high status former farmhouse, which has been changed and adapted over the years, and it is capable of evoking the past and making connections between the early development of the Titchfield area and the present-day. However, the sense of a farmstead/farmyard has been diminished. Also, the Victorian re-fronting to the south elevation has somewhat obscured the true age

⁵ *Conservation Principles: Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment* English Heritage (April 2008). Consultation on an updated version closed on 2 February 2018, but as yet the 2008 version has not been updated.

and structure of the house, with only the massive stacks indicating the age of the building (though these were sometimes also built in revivalist Victorian architecture).

2.43 **Archaeological Interest:** The fabric of Great Posbrook, although not inspected, will hold evidential value of the changes that have occurred over the centuries and will almost certainly contain valuable archaeological information about the building's original arrangement, use and adaptation over the centuries. Great Posbrook, in the wider sense, is a record of former agricultural farmsteads and the farming activities of the Titchfield area.

2.44 **Artistic Interest:** There may be internal features, such as carvings or medieval/post-medieval decorative/architectural features that could be regarded as having some artistic interest. Although the exterior of the building, especially the north elevation, has some aesthetic value, I do not consider that the significance of the building substantially derives from artistic interest or aesthetic value.

The significance of the Southern Barn at Great Posbrook Farm

2.45 The southern barn was listed on 22 October 1976 (see **Appendix 1** for the full list description text). According to the list description, the entry has not been amended since then. I highlight the following from the list entry:

- i. It is a late-medieval aisled barn⁶.
- ii. The barn features massive timbers with tie beams, Queen posts, collars and mostly arched braces, but with some straight ones.
- iii. Great Posbrooke forms a group with the eastern (now demolished) barn and the southern barn, the store shed and small barn and with the cartshed and pigsties (these are of local interest only).

2.46 Although the list description describes the barn as 'late-medieval' Pevsner (ibid) ascribes it to the 16th/17th century, based on more recent and precise dendrochronology⁷ evidence:

"GREAT POSBROOK FARM, S of the house, has a ten-bay aisled BARN c. 100 ft (30 metres) long. Its roof can be dated by dendrochronology to 1579-90 and 1600-22 but confusingly the timbers of these two phases are intermingled in the structure. The slightly wider three bays of the E end may be C18."

⁶ Although this is now known not to be correct – see below.

⁷ A specialised dating process using core sample to do tree growth ring analysis and comparisons.

- 2.47 This dating confirms that the earliest dated fabric of the barn post-dates the Dissolution of the Abbey, in 1538. Whilst there is a broad historic association between the farm at Great Posbrook (as a former Abbey farm) and Titchfield Abbey, the present barn post-dates the Dissolution and it is not directly associated with Titchfield Abbey.
- 2.48 **Architectural interest:** As a substantial 16th/17th century aisled barn, the southern barn has considerable vernacular architectural interest, as a good and now relatively rare example of a high status English barn (in the national context) and also as a representative of its type and age in the regional context of Hampshire, and more locally in the context of Titchfield. Despite the loss of one of the midstreys, and the relatively recent utilitarian profiled sheet roof cladding, its architectural interest takes in its size (indicating its status, if not also an indication of its age) and its form (typical of historic barns and a quintessential part of the English countryside) and the weatherboard cladding (plainly modern, as far as I can see, although typical and characteristic of barns, and with the potential to gather a 'patina of age' over time). This can be seen from the photos at **Appendix 7.2-4**.
- 2.49 However, in the case of the barn, in my view it is the interior (i.e. the exposed structure and spatial volume) where the true significance of the building lies. Whilst I have only briefly inspected the barn internally in 2018, I have also seen the internal photos taken in 1988/1991 in the survey report, and those taken by English Heritage in 2000 (e.g. the one replicated at **Appendix 4.13**). It is this structure and internal volume that truly reveals the age and significance of the barn, far more than anything that can be seen externally⁸.
- 2.50 **Historic interest:** The late-medieval southern barn is clearly a building of considerable historic interest; this derives from its age and early origins and surviving early fabric. As noted at Great Posbrook, the manor of Posbrook remained in the possession of the monastery until the Dissolution in 1538 and the barn (even judging from its earlier fabric) therefore post-dates the Dissolution of Titchfield Abbey. There is a broad historic association with Titchfield Abbey, although not directly with the

⁸ That was confirmed in the c. 2006 enabling development, which steered clear of converting the barn, or remodelling/adapting its interior in any way for a different use. Instead, the storage use was chosen as a solution because it involved minimal intervention to the existing building and keeping it intact. The barn could conceivably have been converted to one or two dwellings, with the possibility of retaining a good amount of the internal volume and exposed structure (I have been involved in such applications), and preserving more of its setting. However, the fact that this was not done, in order to preserve the internal volume and structure, indicates quite clearly that the interior of the building was considered to be of primary importance and of greater value than its setting and, indeed, also the setting of Great Posbrook.

present-day barn itself, which was built post-Dissolution. As before, the barn has the same association with the two prominent local families: the Delmés and the Hewetts.

- 2.51 The southern barn has illustrative historic interest in the way in which it illustrates aspects of history – the perception of the 16th/17th century barn as a link between the past and the present, and it has some similarities with the Abbey Barn near Titchfield Abbey. The southern barn can assist and facilitate an interpretation of the historic farmstead through making connections with, and providing insights into, these past farming communities and their activities. It is possible to tell from the size of the barn that it was associated with a high status farm and probably an extensive associated landholding (e.g. **Appendix 8.5 & 8.6**).
- 2.52 Although there are still some remnants of the former farmstead, and of course the former farmhouse (Great Posbrook), the barn today stands in an immediate setting that has seen changes over the years, and in particular recent decades. As noted in the list description, the southern barn at the time of listing derived a degree of group value from the surviving historic farm buildings (the eastern barn, which no longer exists; the store shed; the small barn; and the cartshed and pigsties). The character of the former farmstead has since then changed to that of a more manicured, domestic small-scale housing development that incorporates retained historic farm structures or outbuildings (e.g. **Appendix 3.8 & Appendix 8.2-8**), although the enabling development of c. 2006 has been carefully designed and the retained buildings still make a contribution to the semblance of a historic farmstead context and setting of the barn.
- 2.53 Despite the changes to the barn itself, as well as the former farmstead, the southern barn still recognisable as a historically significant, high status barn and it is capable of evoking the past and making strong connections between the medieval origins of the Titchfield area and the present-day.
- 2.54 **Archaeological Interest:** The fabric of the southern barn will hold evidential value of the changes that have occurred over the centuries and will almost certainly contain archaeological information about the building's construction (e.g. carpenter's marks or setting-out marks), its use and adaptation over the centuries. The residual farmstead buildings at Great Posbrook, in the wider sense, is a record of former agricultural farmsteads and the farming activities of the Titchfield area.
- 2.55 **Artistic Interest:** Although the interior of the building has some aesthetic value, I do not consider that the significance of the building substantially derives from artistic interest or aesthetic value.

3.0 CONTRIBUTION OF SETTING TO SIGNIFICANCE

Introduction

3.1 In the previous section I have assessed the significance of the listed buildings at the former Great Posbrook Farm. In this section I turn to the contribution of their setting to their significance. I do not consider that it is necessary, or informative, to deal separately with each listed building; instead I deal with both listed buildings as part of the former farmstead at Great Posbrook, although in places I draw distinctions between the barn and the former farmhouse, where that is relevant or necessary.

The contribution of the setting of the listed buildings to their significance

3.2 I consider first the visual relationships between the listed buildings and their setting, before turning to historic association/functional relationships and the (non-visual) experience of the buildings in their present-day setting.

3.3 The list descriptions for both buildings highlight their group value, with each other, and also with the other unlisted farmstead buildings. One of these unlisted buildings, the east barn, has been lost since then (it has been replaced with a barn-like range as part of the c. 2006 development) but the other historic structures have been retained, albeit with some having been converted to storage or other uses (e.g. **Appendix 8.1**). Obviously, these buildings are no longer part of a working farmstead, and there have equally obviously been the addition of houses as part of the enabling development scheme (each with its own garden/curtilage and access).

3.4 However, the sense of a historic farmstead – albeit now somewhat diluted – and the presence of these retained farm buildings are important components in being able to appreciate the listed buildings as part of a former/historic farmstead. The group value and sense of place associated with the ensemble of former farm buildings reveal something about the former farmstead and add to the significance of both listed buildings.

3.5 Turning first to the immediate setting of Great Posbrook, its garden has now been subdivided, but much of the original garden to the east, north and south of the house remains in place. This can be seen from the detailed aerial photo at **Appendix 3.8**. It is still possible to get a sense of an important, high status farmhouse set within a commensurately generous garden. This adds to the ability to appreciate the historic importance and status of the house. There are good views of the house from the gardens around it. From here, the fabric and structure and form and scale and

detailing of the listed house is appreciable, and in these areas its significance is best revealed and most readily appreciable.

- 3.6 Judging from the vegetation, and the type and positioning of the retained buildings, and the barn-like replacement of the east barn, it seems that a great deal of the sense of openness around the house has been retained in the c. 2006 enabling development. Most of the structures that are visible from the house or its garden are either retained structures, or new ones that have been sympathetically placed/designed. I consider that, despite some erosion of significance, mainly due to the subdivision of the garden and the loss of a farmyard, these immediate environs of the house still contribute a great deal to the significance of the house, and the ability to appreciate its significance.
- 3.7 Care was likewise taken in the retention of former farm structures, and the design of the new buildings, in relation to the southern barn. This includes the spaces around it, in which and from where it is experienced. A courtyard, in part defined by the retained stables (as per the plan and key at **Appendix 4.1**) and the barn-like replacement of the east barn and the new house to the west, reflects the arrangement shown on the historic aerial photos at **Appendix 3**. Although not all of the surrounding land is communal or 'belongs' to the south barn (some of it is private gardens), and although the setting of the barn today could no longer be mistaken for a farmyard (e.g. **Appendix 7.2**), this part of its setting can still be said to contribute positively to its appreciation and the way in which it is understood.
- 3.8 There is definition to the courtyard space to the north of the barn and there is a good sense of space around it (**Appendix 3.8**). Crucially, in my view, there are no visual or spatial obstructions along the south of the barn, offering the experience of a historic barn adjoined by, and set within, a rural context. This can be seen, for example, in the photos at **Appendix 8.5-6**, and the outward views at **Appendix 7.5-6**. I consider that, despite some erosion of significance due to the 'domestication' of the now well-maintained and somewhat domestically manicured immediate setting of the barn (e.g. **Appendix 7.4**), these immediate environs of the building still contribute a great deal to the significance of the barn and the ability to appreciate it.
- 3.9 Aside from the area to the south (e.g. **Appendix 8.21**), the former farmstead at Great Posbrook Farm is generally well-defined and well-enclosed. In particular, it is very well-enclosed by a dense belt of evergreen boundary trees, behind a fence, to the north and (much of the) east (e.g. **Appendix 9.1-2**). There are deciduous trees along the southernmost edge of the eastern boundary, although the filtering of these, even

when leafless, prevents clear views of the farmstead buildings from the north or east. There is a localised area to the north-east in which there is gap in the canopies of the boundary trees in which Great Posbrook can be discerned (**Appendix 9.8**). I understand there was a fire to a localised part of the eastern boundary of Great Posbrook, in July 2020. Although I have not inspected this area, I have seen photos and from what I can see the fire caused damage to the timber fence and at least one of the trees. Nevertheless, the eastern boundary has remained generally well-defined.

- 3.10 Because of the generally well-defined boundaries, there are no strong visual relationships between the listed buildings and the land to the north and east. Instead, the overriding characteristic of this part of their setting is the sense of separation between the former farmstead and the land to the north and east (e.g. **Appendix 6.1-5**). The Ordnance Survey map regression at **Appendix 2** shows that, historically, the farmstead was well-defined and enclosed, although this varies over the course of the map regression. The historic aerial photos at **Appendix 3** record that the boundary planting was well-established and both tall and dense by 1946, and it was evergreen.
- 3.11 Whilst it cannot be said with certainty that this would always have been the case historically, the 1881 Ordnance Survey map (**Appendix 2.2**) certainly shows a strong evergreen boundary treatment. It is possible that the boundaries would always have been enclosed to some extent, or it is possible that they may once have been more open. However, it can be said with a reasonable degree of certainty that the boundaries have been well-enclosed since at least 1881.
- 3.12 Aside from glimpses of the buildings at Great Posbrook, in between vegetation when seen from the land to the north and east (and vice versa glimpses when looking outward), the visual relationship between the listed buildings and this part of their setting, part of which includes the appeal site, is very limited. Whilst this land is part of the rural context of the former farmstead, it does not play a strong role in the setting or appreciation of the listed buildings. The listed buildings are well-enclosed and separated from the land to the north and east.
- 3.13 There are glimpsed views of Great Posbrook from Posbrook Lane (e.g. **Appendix 8.1**), although in these views its significance is not properly appreciable, and it is seen across and in between the new houses and buildings (including the converted retained ones) of what is obviously a small housing development. Whilst I can see that efforts were clearly made to give the small development a 'farmstead' character, it is equally

clear that this is not a farmstead, and it could not be mistaken for one. To the extent that the small development can be appreciated as a later development on a former farmstead, and that the historic house in the distance would have been a high status farmhouse that once dominated the farmstead, the views from here contribute to the significance of Great Posbrook.

- 3.14 The setting of the southern barn is more open towards the south-west, south and south-east. It is more visible, from both Posbrook Lane (e.g. **Appendix 8.5-18**) and the open field to the south, which is crossed by a public footpath that connects Great Posbrook Farm and Little Posbrook Farm (e.g. **Appendix 8.19-22**). In longer views from this southern area, the upper parts of Great Posbrook can also be seen, to varying degrees, depending on the distance and the angle. A selection of these views, sequentially on approach from the south, are included at **Appendix 8**. I would categorise these views as 'views of lateral spread' as described at paragraph 10 of GPA 3, and they can also be categorised as dynamic views in the sense that they are seen sequentially on approach to the listed buildings.
- 3.15 Taking the sequence of views from the footpath first, it is clear from the photos (e.g. **Appendix 8.19 & 8.20**) that Great Posbrook Farm does not stand in an unaltered setting, although the setting can be described as rural/semi-rural. The late Victorian semi-detached workers' houses to the south-west, on Posbrook Lane, is plainly visible, as well as the more distant post-war housing of Titchfield (to varying extents, depending on the specific viewpoint and/or season).
- 3.16 The barn in these views is not immediately recognisable as a grade II* listed structure, especially with its re-clad profiled sheet roof, although its size and form make it distinctive and are indicative of a high status historic barn. The Victorian south facade of Great Posbrook is largely filtered by intervening trees (e.g. **Appendix 8.21**). Insofar as it can be seen, it looks like a Victorian building; its significance as a 17th century house is not immediately evident in these views. Its unusual T-shaped plan form cannot be seen or understood.
- 3.17 Whilst the views from here, especially at longer distances, generally do not reveal the significance of the listed buildings, they do give a sense of a farmstead set in a broader rural context (e.g. **Appendix 8.24**). In particular, there is a strong sense of rurality in the way in which the barn (with the farmhouse seen behind it) is seen across the extensive foreground made up of an open agricultural field. There is a hedge (broken in places) along the east of the footpath, with another open field to the east (**Appendix**

8.23), which reinforce the sense of seeing the listed buildings from an area of agricultural fields.

- 3.18 When looking outwards from the area to the south of the farmstead (e.g. **Appendix 7.5-6**), the fields to the south of Great Posbrook Farm also form an obvious and strongly rural component of the setting of the barn, and the former farmstead.
- 3.19 The appeal site (to the right of the farmstead on the photos at **Appendix 8.19-25**) is not visible as open land, but there are views across this land. On one hand, this gives a general sense of a rural/semi-rural setting to the farmstead. On the other hand, the harsh southern edge of Titchfield is seen in the views and erodes the rural character of the setting.
- 3.20 In the longer views from Posbrook Lane to the south (**Appendix 8.5-18**), more can be seen of Great Posbrook, though again that depends on the location/angle of the viewpoint. The general sense is that of a Victorian house (e.g. **Appendix 8.14**), although the large chimneystacks indicate it may be an older building. In views from here, Great Posbrook Farm is seen set within a clump of trees, to the right side of which there are longer views over the Meon Valley. The appeal site is not visible in these views.
- 3.21 These views give a strong sense of rurality in the way in which the barn (with the house seen behind it) is seen across an extensive foreground of open agricultural land, with an adjoining open field to the west of Posbrook Lane, adding to the sense of rurality. This strong sense of rurality in this part of the setting of the barn and former farmhouse is important; it makes a strong positive contribution to their appreciation as former farm buildings, and their significance as former farm buildings.
- 3.22 Although visual relationships are clearly important, setting is not solely a visual consideration. It also encapsulates the experience of a heritage asset, and can include historic associations or functional relationships. Historic associations or functional relationships can also indicate that an area of land may be regarded as part of the historic setting of a heritage asset, and these are also explored below in terms of assessing the contribution of the listed buildings' setting to their significance.
- 3.23 Taking the historic associations/functional relationships first, the 1838 tithe map and apportionment, and the version of it that is coloured with the land parcels associated with Henry Peter Delmé/James Hewett in 1857 (**Appendix 5**) illustrate that all of the

land surrounding the farmstead, in all directions except for the north-west, was historically (or at least in 1857) part of Great Posbrook Farm. That is hardly surprising, given the fact that Great Posbrook Farm was a relatively high status farm that was associated with a large estate (since at least the 18th century but also before that, when the manor of Posbrook was in possession of the Abbey, until the Dissolution in 1538).

- 3.24 These historic associations/functional relationships between the former farmstead and the surrounding land therefore extend in all directions, except for the north-west (though historically it is likely that this land too, by virtue of proximity, would have been associated with the landholding and operation of Great Posbrook Farm). The land that includes these associations also extends to include the closest parts of Titchfield, and extensive tracts of land to the south and west. It is not possible to distinguish on the ground between the land shaded red on the map at **Appendix 5** from land that is not shaded red, in terms of physical attributes or visual/spatial relationships with the former farmstead. Instead, these historic associations/functional relationships exist at an abstract level that is removed from the way in which the listed buildings are experienced.
- 3.25 An exception, in my opinion, is the land to the south of the barn. With the barn, situated as it is at the edge of a large field, it is not difficult to make a functional/associational connection between the barn and this adjoining land (e.g. **Appendix 8.5**). I consider this to be important, although it is somewhat undefined, or hard to define, given that the large field in its present form would not have existed in the late-medieval period and this, along with the vagaries of changes in ownership over the years or even cultivation/use, present difficulties in defining quite how to clearly delineate the land with historic associations/functional relationships.
- 3.26 The land was sold off in 1996, over two decades ago, and has been in different ownership since then. The former farmhouse has likewise been converted to three dwellings and it has been severed from the former farmstead in terms of ownership. Today there is a separate (modern) farmhouse for the present-day Great Posbrook Farm, which stands to the west of the historic farmstead. The use of the historic former farmstead at Great Posbrook in association with the surrounding land had ceased in 1996. It now has the character of a small-scale housing development, albeit obviously one that was developed sympathetically on a former farmstead, incorporating some retained historic buildings. The farmyard has been compartmentalised by the curtilages of the individual buildings, each with its

own/shared access and each with its own garden, outbuildings and residential paraphernalia. This can be seen on the oblique aerial photo at **Appendix 3.8**.

- 3.27 All of this has affected the degree to which obvious functional relationships or associations between the listed buildings and the land surrounding the former farmstead can be made. For these reasons, the functional/associative contribution of the surrounding land to the significance of the listed buildings is, on balance, at most very limited – with the exception of the land to the south of the barn, where historic associations/functional relationships remain strongly appreciable.
- 3.28 Turning then to the experiential contribution of the listed buildings' setting, this is not exclusively limited to views and takes in the 'surroundings in which the heritage asset is experienced' (the NPPF definition). This is a broader concept than visibility alone and can be regarded as taking in the fact that that the surrounding open land of the setting of the listed buildings, in all directions, can to some extent be experienced in conjunction with the listed buildings, regardless of the fact that they might not be visually juxtaposed, or intervisible.
- 3.29 The places where the contribution of the rural setting is the strongest and most readily appreciable are to the west, south-west, south and south-east of the former farmstead. The areas to the north and east are different, in that it is obvious that the setting of the former farmstead has changed, with the presence the somewhat harsh southern edge of Titchfield (e.g. **Appendix 9.9**). The land to the north and east can of course still be appreciated as rural, although at an experiential level the sense of a rural setting and context has been eroded by the presence of Titchfield (see also **Appendix 9.10-11**). The same sense of a rural hinterland/setting is far stronger in the areas to the west, south-west, south and south-east, and it is these areas which make the greatest contribution to an appreciation of a rural setting to the listed buildings.
- 3.30 The primary function of the land to the north of the former farmstead, of which the appeal site forms part, it to act as a gap between Titchfield and the small settlement at the former farmstead that clearly separates the two.
- 3.31 In conclusion, the immediate surroundings of the house and the southern barn are important and still contribute a great deal to the significance of the buildings, and the ability to appreciate their significance. Beyond that, the part of the setting of Great Posbrook Farm where there is a direct and clearly appreciable relationship between the listed buildings and the adjoining open rural context, and from where both of the

listed buildings themselves can be seen is the south, where the former farmstead is not fully enclosed.

- 3.32 The land to the north and east does not play such a strong role in the experience of the listed buildings, but it adds to the rural context, with the land to the north serving as a separation between the former farmstead and Titchfield.

4.0 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AND AVOIDANCE OF HARM

4.1 In this section I briefly discuss the previous Inspector's decision, and how the present scheme was adapted in response to that, to avoid/minimise any harm. As I have stated in the Introduction, I have helped to shape the revised proposal for up to 57 homes, which has taken on board comments made by the Inspector for the previous proposal for up to 150 homes, and subsequent comments on the revised layout made by Historic England in December 2019.

4.2 This section of my evidence is focused on describing the changes that were made to the original proposal for 150 homes, and how these changes specifically relate to the Inspector's decision and Historic England's pre-application feedback.

Summary of the previous Inspector's key findings

4.3 The Inspector refused the scheme based on harm to the listed buildings at Great Posbrook (amongst other things) and I highlight the following points:

- i. The wider setting of the historic farmstead within a rural landscape assists in understanding the scale and status of the land holding, sets the farmstead in an appropriate open rural agricultural setting, and separates it from the nearby settlement of Titchfield. This contributes to the overall significance of the heritage assets (paragraph 36).
- ii. There has been some recent housing within the wider setting which has a negative impact and detracts from the significance of the heritage assets of the historic farmstead (paragraph 36).
- iii. The proximity of the settlement of Titchfield and the exposed urban edge already have a negative impact on the wider setting of the heritage assets, bringing suburban development close to the farmstead and reducing the wider rural hinterland (paragraph 37).
- iv. The proposal would result in harm to the setting of the listed buildings by virtue of built development being closer to the buildings and reducing the rural setting of the buildings. It would bring the settlement of Titchfield up to the cluster of buildings and in effect subsume the once separate element into the broader extent of the settlement. This would reduce the connection of the existing farmstead and listed buildings to the rural hinterland and obscure the separation from the nearby settlement. (paragraph 40).
- v. The dislocation of the listed buildings at Great Posbrook from the existing built up area is an important and fundamental component of their setting (paragraph 41).

Response to the previous Inspector's key findings and pre-application submission to Historic England

- 4.4 It was clear from the previous Inspector's conclusions that the listed buildings at Great Posbrook Farm should retain a rural hinterland and that maintaining a clear separation between Titchfield and Great Posbrook Farm was important.
- 4.5 This, alongside landscape considerations (covered separately by Mr Smith) indicated that any new development should be along the edge of the existing settlement and separated from Great Posbrook. This was the starting point for determining the location of the revised scheme. Maintaining the separation meant that the total number of dwellings has been reduced by 93 (to 38% of the original number), and the proposed area which would be occupied by homes has been reduced from c. 6.6ha to 1.65ha (25% of the original area).
- 4.6 I considered that there was also an opportunity to use the associated landscaping to improve on the harsh, exposed southern edge of Titchfield, and the stark, white painted buildings that can be seen from the south in conjunction with Great Posbrook. Therefore, good and dense boundary planting to the south of the development was incorporated from the outset. This was reflected in the pre-application scheme that was submitted to Historic England in July 2019, which comprised (see **Appendix 10**):
- i. Site Location Plan (drawing No. 01G);
 - ii. Illustrative Site Plan (drawing No. 02H);
 - iii. Heritage Covering Letter (dated 19 July 2019); and
 - iv. Accompanying heritage appendices.
- 4.7 Historic England responded in a letter dated 21 August 2019 (ref: PA01007003) (**Appendix 11**). I summarise the advice below:
- i. Historic England welcomed the positive steps that have been taken to try and address the impacts of the previous appeal scheme. The pre-application scheme presented a marked improvement.
 - ii. Whilst it continues to draw the urban settlement closer to the listed buildings, the extent is much reduced, better preserving the rural setting of the farmstead. This is particularly notable in key views from the south of the heritage assets looking north, where the development has been omitted.
 - iii. The additional tree screening to the southern boundary of the proposed development would improve the appearance of the harsh urban edge currently created by the Bellfield estate, which detracts. Such boundary treatment would be an enhancement on the wider setting of the heritage assets.

- iv. The need for extending the woodland landscaping up to the northern boundary of Great Posbrook Farm was questioned. The open views across the rural fields and the Meon Valley beyond would no longer be legible. This would erode the farmstead's open rural context and historic connection with this adjoining land. Historic England considered that this would impact on the character of the area and setting of the historic farmstead and its listed buildings.
- v. It was recommended that further consideration should be given to this; reducing the proposed woodland between the development and Great Posbrook Farm to retain more of the existing open rural landscape surrounding the farmstead would help achieve this. It would allow the farmstead to continue to be read as a distinct and separate feature, as well as maintaining a greater degree of its agricultural and rural context. This is a key aspect of the setting of the listed buildings, which at present can still be appreciated.
- vi. It was also recommended that a lighting strategy should be produced to limit and manage the light spill from the proposed development, and any potential impact this could have on the nearby designated heritage assets.

4.8 The comment regarding the reduction of the woodland up to the northern boundary of Great Posbrook Farm was incorporated in the revised application submission. As an outline application, a lighting strategy has not been produced; that would need to relate to the exact layout of the houses and access roads. I consider this to be a matter that would be best dealt with reserved matters stage.

4.9 The revised proposal for up to 57 homes has incorporated Historic England's pre-application feedback and maintains clear separation between Titchfield and Great Posbrook. The distance between the appeal site boundary and Great Posbrooke, at its closest point, is 56.4 metres, and this space would be occupied by open grassland and new woodland planting. The result of this distance, and the proposed planting, is that Great Posbrook would no longer be "*subsume[d] [...] into the broader extent of the settlement*" (paragraph 41), but would instead retain a separate identity with a clear gap and a rural hinterland.

4.10 The additional tree screening to the south would improve the appearance of the harsh, detracting urban edge of the Bellfield estate and be an enhancement in comparison.

5.0 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The key heritage issues

- 5.1 The principal role of the application site is that of maintaining a separation gap between the former farmstead at Great Posbrook and Titchfield. The appeal site is slightly irregular, and the gap between it and the northern fence of the former farmstead at Great Posbrook would vary along its length. However, when measured along the east, where the appeal site is closest from the northern fence of the former farmstead at Great Posbrook, the separation between the fence of the former farmstead and the fence of the closest proposed house (as per the Illustrative Masterplan) is approximately 56m⁹.
- 5.2 Whilst it is obvious to me that the current gap would be reduced by the appeal scheme, and that the setting of the former farmstead at Great Posbrook would change, it is also obvious to me that a clear and substantive gap would be maintained between Great Posbrook and Titchfield. Unlike the previous appeal scheme, there would not be new housing on the land immediately adjacent or bordering the former farmstead and farmhouse (as was described at paragraph 41 of the Inspector's Decision Letter).
- 5.3 The appeal scheme would not bring the settlement of Titchfield up to the historic farmstead. A separation would be maintained, and the former farmstead would remain distinct from the settlement.
- 5.4 When viewed from the south, along Posbrook Lane and the public footpaths, travelling towards the farmstead and Titchfield, the views of the farmhouse and barn, recognisable as a distinct farmstead with adjoining open land, would remain unaffected. The harsh urban edge of Titchfield, which is also visible in some of these views, would be softened by the proposed landscaping along the south of the appeal site, once this has matured. There would be an interim impact, with the settlement edge closer to Great Posbrook, albeit I consider that a well-designed development with a fine grain, street trees, and houses in good quality materials, such as brick

⁹ I highlight here that the heritage comments on behalf of Fareham Borough Council (**Appendix 13**) incorrectly states that "there would [be] a gap of between c. 28.5m and 33m between the back fences of the proposed dwellings and the fence around the northern perimeter of Great Posbrook." It is described later in the same document as "a relatively narrow gap". This error was repeated at paragraph 8.56 of the Committee Report, which states that "Titchfield and the farmstead would remain separated by a minimum gap of around 28.5 metres. This is a relatively narrow gap [...]". In fact, the gap as proposed is double what was envisaged by Fareham Borough Council's heritage advisor and what was stated in the Committee Report.

and tiled roofs, would be an improvement on the rendered and painted rectangular blocks of the Belfield Estate, with their concrete tiles roofs. It would also be possible to phase the landscaping such that planting would occur prior to the construction and therefore provide advanced growth. This landscaped edge would provide a less urbanised and more rural backdrop, which would improve the appreciation of the former farmstead as set in a rural context.

- 5.5 Because of the separation, the former farmstead would not be 'enclosed' or subsumed by either built form (or landscaping). The farmstead and listed buildings would not become detached from their rural hinterland. The historic functional connection with the adjoining open land would be maintained.
- 5.6 In views on the public footpaths to the east, a clear sense of separation between the settlement of Titchfield and the historic farmstead, including the listed buildings, would be maintained. Again, from here the proposed landscaping along the south of the appeal site, once established, would soften the present harsh urban edge of Titchfield and provide a less urbanised, more rural backdrop, which would improve the appreciation of the farmstead as set in a rural context, albeit not far from the settlement.
- 5.7 The remaining area that separates the farmstead and listed buildings from the settlement ensures that the historic farmstead is not urbanised in the way that it would have been with the previous appeal scheme. The 'dislocation' of the historic farmstead from the existing built up area, which the Inspector at the previous appeal described as 'an important and fundamental component of the listed buildings' setting' would not be lost as a result of the development (as was described at paragraph 44 of the Inspector's Decision Letter).
- 5.8 The proposed development also maintains a sense of the rural surroundings to the former farmstead, and it continues to allow views eastwards from Posbrook Lane, and westwards across the land north of the former farmstead. It leaves the key views of the farmstead from the south, in which the barn and part of the farmhouse can be seen juxtaposed with the open farmland to the east, absent of encroaching development. However, from here the harsh urban edge currently created by the Bellfield housing estate is enhanced with landscaping, as has already been described.

- 5.9 I do not consider that the significance of Great Posbrook, or the ability to understand it as a historic former farmstead, separate from Titchfield, would be materially affected. The significance of the listed farmhouse and barn, as being part of a historic farmstead would not be reduced. Whilst the southern edge of Titchfield would be closer, it would also be a softer edge, which would better relate to the adjoining rural land than the existing harsh urban edge. I do not consider that a softer and more appropriate settlement edge, that maintains a clear and substantive gap, would be more harmful than the existing harsh, but more distant, urban edge. There would certainly be an improvement in some of the longer views from the south, in which the relative proximity of the appeal scheme would be far less noticeable, but in which the softened urban edge would be noticeable as a material improvement (though there would be a gradually reducing temporary impact in the interim, while the landscaping matures).
- 5.10 I therefore do not find, on balance, that the significance of the listed buildings would be materially affected. This conclusion takes into account the enhancement of the harsh urban edge created by the Bellfield estate through the proposed landscape buffer.
- 5.11 In Historic England's consultation response (**Appendix 12**), there was notably no objection to the application, or any expressed concerns. However, the response did identify a minor degree of harm to the setting of the listed buildings (well within less than substantial harm in NPPF terms). This does not appear to have taken into account any enhancement, which is not mentioned anywhere in the response.
- 5.12 I would highlight here that despite the omission of references to improvements in Historic England's consultation response, the pre-application response (**Appendix 11**) did identify improvements:
"The additional tree screening to the boundary of the proposed housing development would improve the appearance of the harsh urban edge currently created by the Bellfield estate, which is a detracting feature. Such boundary treatment would be an enhancement on the wider setting of the heritage assets [my emphasis]."
- 5.13 Given the low level of harm identified in Historic England's consultation response, and given the fact that no improvement was taken into account in the consultation response, it seems at least plausible to me that, on balance, if both the

improvement and the (perceived) harm were taken into account, a similar overall conclusion to mine may have been possible.

- 5.14 The heritage comments on behalf of Fareham Borough Council (**Appendix 13**) found less than substantial harm to the listed farmhouse and barn¹⁰, again at the lower end of the spectrum (that is also reflected at paragraph 8.56 of the Committee Report). Again, this does not take into account any enhancement. The assessment in that case was, notably, also informed by incorrect measurements that assumed the proposed gap would be only half as wide as it is actually proposed to be.
- 5.15 Whilst it remains the my professional opinion that there would, on balance, be no harm to the significance of the listed buildings, it seems to me that even if there was some harm, there is now very little disagreement between the Appellant, Historic England, and Fareham Borough Council.
- 5.16 Even if the Inspector were to conclude that there would be some harm to the setting/significance of the listed buildings, there is broad agreement that this would be of no more than a very low magnitude.
- 5.17 If that is the conclusion, this harm clearly falls within the lowest end of the NPPF paragraph 196 spectrum, and would need to be given appropriate weight in the overall planning balance, against all other relevant considerations.

¹⁰ I note here that both the heritage comments on behalf of Fareham Borough Council, and the Committee Report, categorically state that there would be no harm to the locally listed buildings within the Great Posbrook farmstead. Whilst my own assessment supports that conclusion, I find it hard to understand why some heritage assets in the group (note that the list descriptions for both the barn and the farmhouse highlight group value with these unlisted buildings) are harmed, whilst some are not. By parity of reasoning, it seems to me that the harm to the group of historic farmstead buildings, through erosion of their setting, must apply to all – unless the locally listed farm outbuildings somehow have a different setting from that of the barn and the farmhouse, though that is not explained anywhere. Instead, it seems to me that the historic farmstead buildings form a group that has a shared setting, and they derive significance from their rural setting for the same reasons. In this context, I find it hard to understand why the harm as purported would be restricted exclusively to the statutory listed buildings.

6.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The key heritage issues

6.1 I consider the key issues to be:

- i. whether the appeal scheme would cause any harm to the significance of the listed buildings;
- ii. whether the appeal scheme would enhance the significance of the listed buildings; and
- iii. if any harm would be caused, the degree of harm.

6.2 In my view there would, on balance, be no harm. However, without prejudice, in the event that the Inspector disagrees with my assessment, I consider the degree of harm to the significance of the listed buildings.

The significance of Great Posbrook

6.3 As a house of 17th century origins, and with retained 17th century fabric, with an unusual original T-plan, Great Posbrook has considerable architectural interest as a good example of English vernacular architecture. The retained internal features and structure adds to its architectural interest, and so do the residual historic plan form, were it exists, as well as the exterior.

6.4 The Victorian 'upgrade' to the south façade of Great Posbrook is part of the evolutionary narrative of the house and the way in which it was updated to suit changing fashions. In that sense it may be said to be of some interest. Although it seems to be of reasonably good quality, it does not strike me as exceptional in the context of Victorian domestic and/or vernacular architecture.

6.5 Great Posbrook has considerable historic interest, in its early origins as a farm associated with Titchfield Abbey, although the present-day structures are all post-Dissolution and no direct link survives. The building, despite having been converted and long ceased to be a farmhouse, still acts as a link between the past and present, assist in the interpretation of the past through making connections with, and provide insights into, past communities and their activities. The house has interest as a representative example of a high status farmhouse that has been adapted over the years. The surviving 17th century fabric and later features of the former farmhouse add to the historic interest of the house. Although there are remnants of the former farmstead, and of course the 16th century southern barn, today it

stands in an immediate setting that has seen changes over the years, and in particular recent decades.

- 6.6 The character of the former farmstead has changed to that of a more manicured, domestic small-scale housing development that incorporates retained historic farm structures or outbuildings, though the listed former farmhouse still derives a degree of group value from the surviving historic farm buildings.

The significance of the southern barn

- 6.7 The southern barn has considerable vernacular architectural interest as a 16th century (and later) aisled barn; it is a good and relatively rare example of a high status English barn. Despite the loss of one of the midstreys, and the relatively recent utilitarian profiled sheet roof cladding, its architectural interest takes in its size (indicating its status, if not also its age) and its form (typical of historic barns and a quintessential part of the English countryside).
- 6.8 However, the interior (i.e. the exposed structure and spatial volume) is where the true significance of the building lies. The internal volume and structure best reveal the age and significance of the barn, far more than anything that can be seen externally.
- 6.9 The southern barn clearly has considerable historic interest; this derives from its age and early origins and surviving early fabric. The structure can assist and facilitate an interpretation of the post-Dissolution period through making connections with, and providing insights into, the past farming communities and their activities. It is possible to tell from the imposing size of the barn that it was associated with a high status farm and probably an extensive associated landholding.

The contribution of the setting of the listed buildings at Great Posbrook

- 6.10 The list descriptions for both buildings highlight their group value, with each other, and also with the other unlisted farmstead buildings. One of these unlisted buildings, the east barn, has been lost, but the other historic structures have been retained, albeit with some having been converted to storage or other uses. Obviously, these buildings are no longer part of a working farmstead, and there have equally obviously been the addition of houses as part of the c. 2006 enabling development scheme (each with its own garden/curtilage and access).

- 6.11 The sense of a historic farmstead – albeit now somewhat diluted – and the presence of these retained farm buildings remain important components in being able to appreciate the listed buildings as part of a former/historic farmstead. The group value and sense of place associated with the ensemble of former farm buildings still reveal something about the former farmstead and add to the significance of both listed buildings.
- 6.12 Much of the original garden to the east, north and south of Great Posbrook remains in place, although it is now subdivided. Nevertheless, it is still possible to get a sense of an important, high status farmhouse set within a commensurately generous garden. This adds to the ability to appreciate the historic importance and status of the house.
- 6.13 From the garden, the fabric and structure and scale and detailing of the listed house is appreciable, and in these areas its significance is best revealed. Despite some erosion of significance, mainly due to the subdivision of the garden and the loss of a farmyard, the immediate environs of the house still contribute a great deal to the significance of the house, and the ability to appreciate its significance.
- 6.14 The barn today stands in an immediate setting that has seen many changes over the years, and in particular recent decades, although there are still some remnants of the former farmstead, and of course the former farmhouse. The character of the former farmstead has changed since the time of its listing, to that of a manicured, domestic small-scale housing development that incorporates retained historic farm structures or outbuildings. The enabling development of c. 2006 has nevertheless been carefully designed and the retained farm buildings still make a contribution to the semblance of a historic farmstead context and setting of the barn. Although the setting of the barn today could not be mistaken for a farmyard, it still contributes positively to its appreciation and the way in which it can be understood.
- 6.15 In the absence of visual or spatial obstructions to the south of the barn, it is possible to experience it as a historic barn adjoined by, and set within, a rural context when seen from the south or when looking outwards from this area.
- 6.16 Aside from the area to the south, the former farmstead at Great Posbrook Farm is generally well-defined and well-enclosed. Because of the generally well-defined boundaries, there are no strong visual relationships between the listed buildings and the land to the north and east. This land does prove an experiential sense of

rural surroundings (east) and separation from the settlement of Titchfield. Aside from glimpses of the buildings at Great Posbrook, in between vegetation when seen from the land to the north and east (and vice versa glimpses when looking outward), the visual relationship between the listed buildings and this part of their setting is very limited.

- 6.17 The barn, when seen from the south, is not immediately recognisable as a grade II* listed structure, especially with its re-clad profiled sheet roof, although its size and form indicates a high status historic barn. The fields to the south form an obvious and strongly rural component of the setting of the barn, and the former farmstead, both when looking towards the farmstead or outwards from the area to the south.
- 6.18 The undeveloped nature of the land to the east of the farmstead, when seen from the south, adds to the general perception of the rural/semi-rural setting. The appeal site itself is not visible as an open field. The views from here, especially at longer distances, generally do not reveal the significance of the listed buildings, although they give a sense of a rural context. In particular, there is strong sense of rurality in the way in which the barn (with the house seen behind it) is seen across an extensive foreground of open agricultural land, with adjoining open fields to the west of Posbrook Lane, adding to the sense of rurality. This strong sense of rurality in this part of the setting of the barn and former farmhouse is important; it makes a strong positive contribution to their appreciation as former farm buildings, and their significance as former farm buildings.
- 6.19 It is not difficult to make a functional/associational connection between the barn and the land to the south of it, being situated as it is at the edge of a large field. However, elsewhere the functional/associative contribution of the surrounding land to the significance of the listed buildings is, on balance, more limited. The places where the contribution of the rural setting is the strongest and most readily appreciable are to the west, south-west, south and south-east of the farmstead. The area to the north and east is different, in that it is obvious that the setting of the former farmstead has changed, with the presence the somewhat harsh southern edge of Titchfield. The land to the north serves as a separation between the former farmstead and Titchfield.

The impacts of the appeal scheme

- 6.20 The appeal site is slightly irregular, and the gap between it and the northern fence of the former farmstead at Great Posbrook would vary along its length. However, when measured along the east, where the appeal site is closest from the northern fence of the former farmstead at Great Posbrook, the separation between the fence of the former farmstead and the fence of the closest proposed house (as per the Illustrative Masterplan) is approximately 56m.
- 6.21 Whilst it is obvious to me that the current gap would be reduced, and that the setting of the former farmstead at Great Posbrook would change, it is also obvious to me that a clear and substantive gap would be maintained between Great Posbrook and Titchfield. Unlike the previous appeal scheme, there would not be new housing on the land immediately adjacent to/bordering the former farmstead and farmhouse. The appeal scheme would not bring the settlement of Titchfield up to the historic farmstead. A separation would be maintained, and the former farmstead would remain distinct from the settlement.
- 6.22 When viewed from the south, along Posbrook Lane and the public footpaths, travelling towards the farmstead and Titchfield, the views of the farmhouse and barn, recognisable as a distinct farmstead with adjoining open land, would remain unaffected. The harsh urban edge of Titchfield, which is also visible in these views, would be softened by the proposed landscaping along the south of the appeal site. This would improve the appreciation of the former farmstead as set in a rural context (though there would be a gradually reducing temporary impact in the interim, while the landscaping matures).
- 6.23 The farmstead would not be enclosed or subsumed by built form or landscaping. The farmstead and listed buildings would not become detached from the rural hinterland. The historic functional connection with the adjoining open land would be maintained. The 'dislocation' of the historic farmstead from the existing built up area, which the Inspector at the previous appeal described as 'an important and fundamental component of the listed buildings' setting' would not be lost as a result of the development.
- 6.24 The significance of Great Posbrook, or the ability to understand it as a historic former farmstead, separate from Titchfield, would not be materially affected. Whilst the southern edge of Titchfield would be closer, it would also be a softer edge, which would better relate to the adjoining rural land than the harsh existing

urban edge. I do not consider that a softer and more appropriate settlement edge, that maintains a clear and substantive gap, would be more harmful than the existing harsh, but more distant, urban edge. There would be improvements in some of the longer views from the south, in which the relative proximity of the appeal scheme would be far less noticeable, but in which the softened urban edge would be a noticeable improvement.

- 6.25 I therefore do not find, on balance, that the significance of the listed buildings would be materially affected.
- 6.26 Given the low level of harm identified in Historic England's consultation response, and given the fact that no improvement was taken into account in the consultation response, it seems at least plausible to me that, on balance, if both the improvement and the (perceived) harm were taken into account, a similar overall conclusion to mine may have been reached.
- 6.27 The heritage comments on behalf of Fareham Borough Council found less than substantial harm to the listed farmhouse and barn , again at the lower end of the spectrum (that is also reflected at paragraph 8.56 of the Committee Report). Again, this does not take into account any enhancement. The assessment in that case was, however, based on incorrect measurements that assumed the proposed gap would be only half as wide as it is actually proposed to be. Again, no enhancement was taken into account.
- 6.28 Whilst it remains the my professional opinion that there would, overall, be no harm to the significance of the listed buildings, it seems to me that even if there was some harm, there is now very little disagreement between the Appellant, Historic England, and Fareham Borough Council as to the low level of such harm.
- 6.29 Even if the Inspector were to conclude that there would be some harm to the setting/significance of the listed buildings, there is broad agreement that this would be of no more than a very low magnitude.

Overall heritage conclusions

- 6.30 I consider that there would be no harm to the significance of the heritage assets. If it is concluded that there would be some harm, this harm clearly falls within the lowest end of the NPPF paragraph 196 spectrum, and would need to be given

appropriate weight in the overall planning balance, against all other relevant considerations, which falls beyond the scope of the heritage evidence.

6.31 I do not make the overall planning balance, which is dealt with in the evidence of Mr Brown.