

Proposed New Sheep Barn
Oldlands, Fenn Lane, Dadlington
Warwickshire
Heritage Impact Assessment

1.0 Introduction

This HIA is written in support of the application for a proposed new sheep barn at Oldlands, located in the Registered Battlefield relating to the Battle of Bosworth. A previous application was submitted for a larger indoor menage; a considerably larger structure, under 20/01003/FUL, dated 23 September 2020. This was refused by notice dated 14 June 2021. The application was appealed under APP/K2420/W/21/3286965 and the application was dismissed.

1.1

The applicant has therefore taken on board the comments issued by the planning inspector and revised their application to a far more sensitive scheme, commensurate with the agricultural nature of the site and this HIA seeks to justify the proposal.

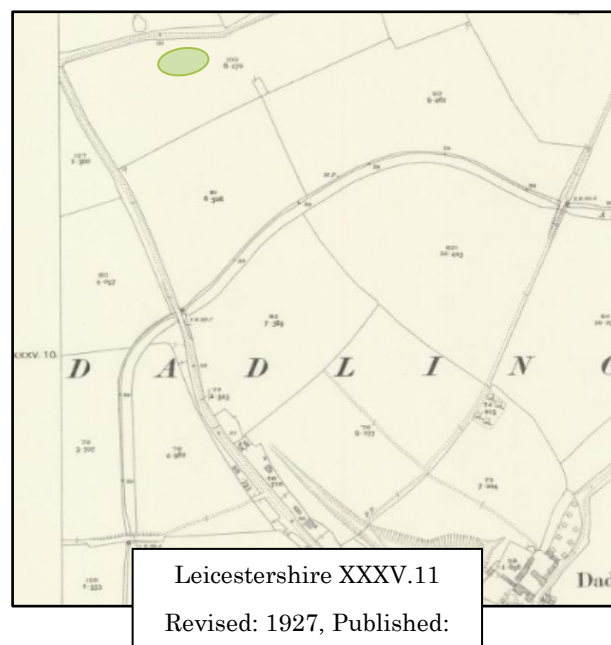
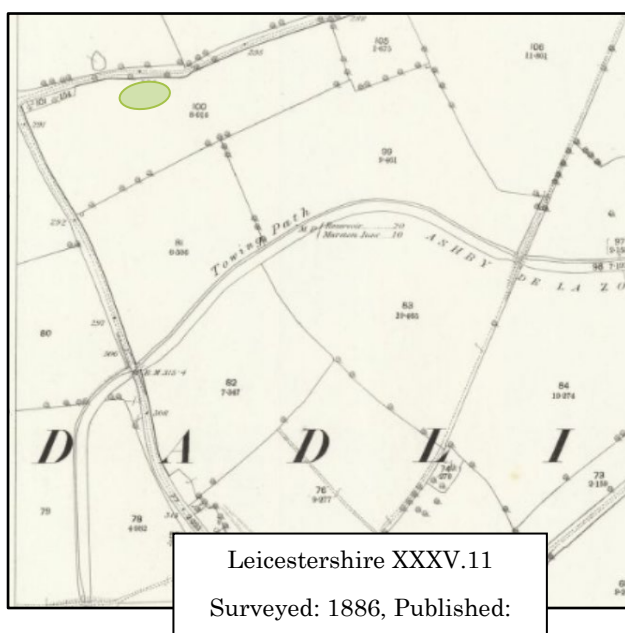
2.0 Historic Background

2.1

Before appraising the scheme, the HIA must satisfy para 200 of the NPPF, which states:

In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance

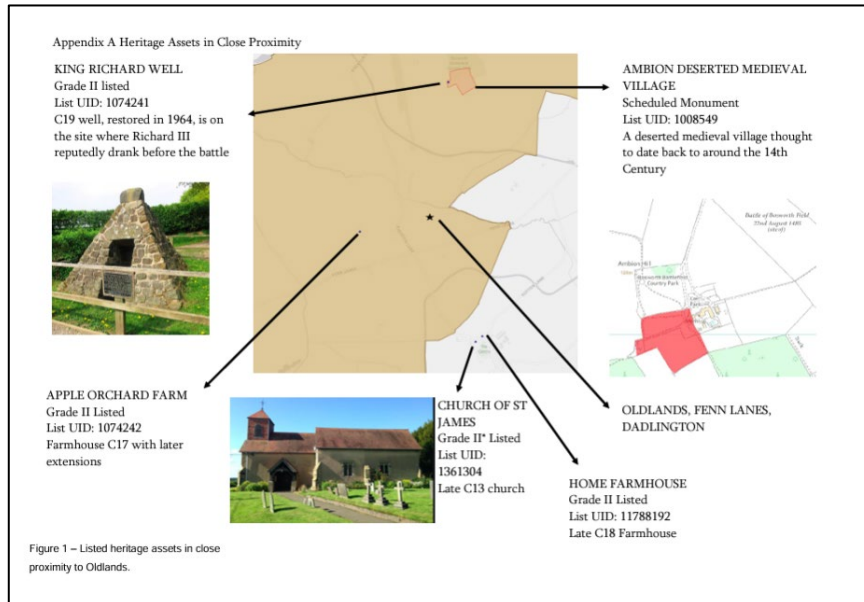
2.2



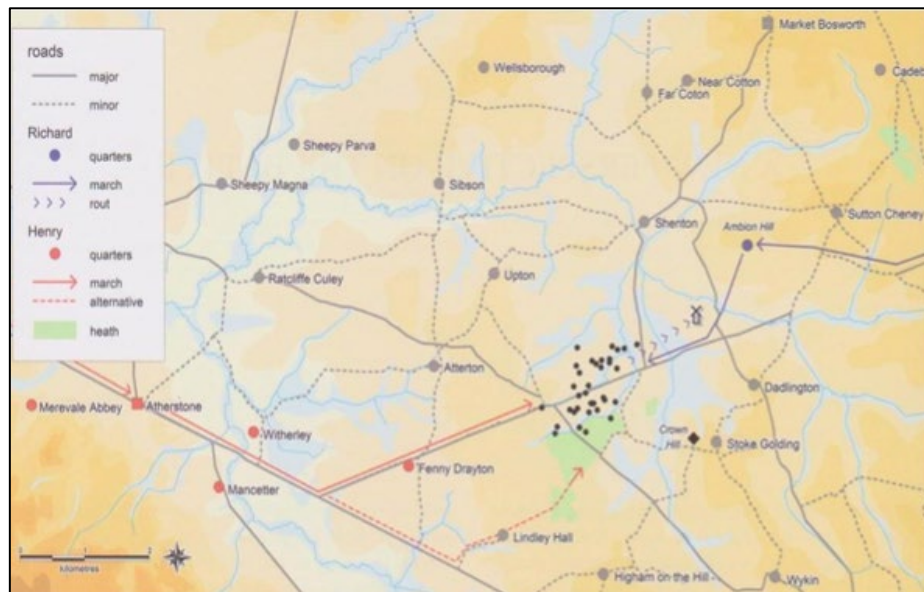
The earliest OS map recording of the application site (highlighted in green) is found in the XXXV.11 series (1888). A revised edition (1928) shows that very little has changed over time, with the exception of cuttings in Dadlington. The application site was a vacant piece of agricultural land at the time of both map regressions – this confirms the current farm use on the site is mid-late C20.

2.2

To avoid duplicating the historical context to the Battle of Bosworth Registered Battlefield, it is necessary to refer to the submitted HIA under 20/01003/FUL, which provides a comprehensive background to the Battle of Bosworth. There is also a supporting document which provides a contextual background to the relevant heritage assets in close proximity, submitted as part of the planning appeal under APP/K2420/W/21/3286965. An extract is included here (Appeal Proof of Evidence) to demonstrate the relevant heritage assets affected:



A further extract from the planning appeal documentation is provided below (Appeal Proof of Evidence), a map of the approach routes by Foard and Curry (2013). This is deemed to be the most up to date confirmation of the battlefield site. Dadlington is observed to the south of the principle area where gunshot has been excavated.



The prescient paragraph from the HIA relating to the application site is as follows, taken from Chapter 4 of the HIA submitted under 20/01003/FUL (JHM Planning Nov 2020):

2.4

However, the precise location of the battlefield and the most prominent actions that took place within it are open to interpretation and part of the ongoing historiographical debate. Consider an illuminating Victorian guide to the battlefield site from 1872 (Leamington Spa Courier) which is contrasted by a local newspaper (Hinkley and Bosworth Trader, 1987) reporting on the local residents of Dadlington, who insisted new evidence had come to light which rendered the interpretation centre and memorial as wrongly sited. The precise location of the battlefield site has much impact on the potential for tourism and inward investment.



2.5

The ongoing historiographical debate, which is now more heavily focused on the remains of Richard III, does not lead to a conclusive evidence of the precise battlefield location. This is acknowledged by the Planning Inspector in the aforementioned Planning Appeal APP/K2420/W/21/3286965:

'It appears there is still some uncertainty about exactly where, within the Registered Battlefield, the various events before, during, and after the battle took place. Moreover, the landscape has altered much over the intervening years, with some of the more notable changes being the greater sense of enclosure with hedges and trees, differing agricultural practices, the draining of areas of marshland, the building of a railway and a canal, and the erection of various modern buildings.'

And

'The appellant said the development would be on a peripheral part of the battlefield and would have no impact on an appreciation of the course of the battle. As stated though, there is still a degree of uncertainty as to where the battle and its surrounding events unfolded, and so I cannot be confident this area did not have a greater involvement than the appellant said'

3.0 Assessment of Proposal

3.1

The applicant has taken on board the comments raised by the Planning Inspector in the dismissed appeal APP/K2420/W/21/3286965. This HIA does not seek to reintroduce any assertion that the significance of the Battle of Bosworth lies elsewhere within the Registered Battlefield. Instead, the proposal has been designed sensitively, to provide a modestly scaled agricultural building, in close proximity to an area of the battlefield that carries significance. This takes in consideration of the Planning Inspectors comments relating to the site's significance, namely:

'the topography is still readily apparent, as a central valley with slightly higher land around, most notably to the north and south. It also retains its character and appearance as a largely undeveloped, open, rural landscape, while there is an archaeological value as informative artefacts continue to be unearthed. Consequently, despite the lack of clarity about exactly where events unfolded, and even though changes have occurred in the meantime, an appreciation of this important battle is still possible, especially when looking from the higher land'

and

'The building would be visible when on the public footpath from Dadlington that runs down the north-facing slope to Fenn Lanes. From this elevated position the Registered Battlefield is laid out before the viewer, and so it is a good vantage point to appreciate the battle and gain an understanding as to how it unfolded. Indeed, Lord Stanley's army quite probably observed part of the battle from on this slope as it rises to Dadlington and Stoke Golding, and so this view could well be of some importance. The proposal would also be visible when coming down Shenton Lane to the west of the appeal site, and would no doubt be apparent from other elevated land around as well as from private fields nearby.'

3.2

The importance of the application site – as a vantage point to appreciate the battle - has been established by the Planning Inspector, which cannot now be disputed. It is noted in further in the Inspector's commentary that the proposed building would have been oversized for its location, thus out of context, over bearing and unduly prominent; they stated the following:

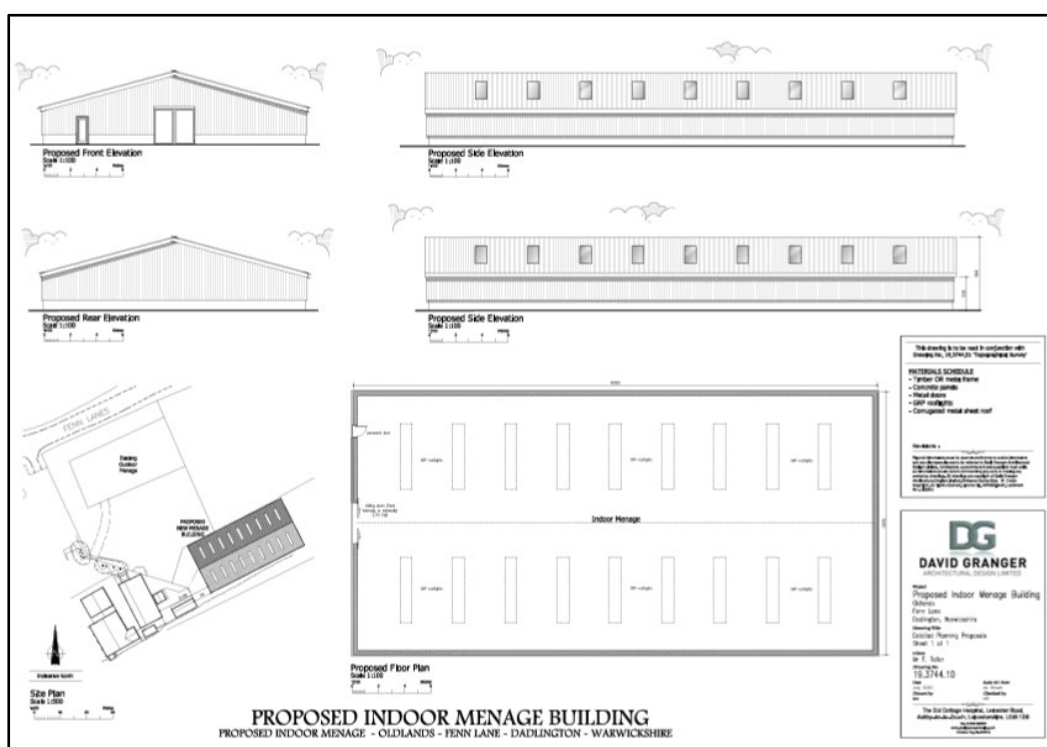
'The menage would be a relatively sizeable structure. It would be concealed to some extent by existing planting, but given its height and scale, and mindful too of the rising land to the south, the effect of this in screening the building would be limited.'

And

'To varying degrees, from these viewpoints I consider that introducing this large building into the landscape would detract from its open, rural character and appearance.'

3.3

In considering the design of the refused application which was dismissed at appeal, it is easy to understand why the Local Planning Authority and Planning Inspector reached their viewpoint:



The scheme is wholly out of context for the historic setting within the Registered Battlefield. The principle issue is the depth / width of the building at 20 meters. This results in oversized end walls / gable ends that are resonant of an unsightly C20 pole barn; the type that has caused so much harm to the setting of listed farm complexes. Its footprint – a bulky rectangular plan form at 800m² - would exceed that of the surrounding built form and it would have become by far the most dominant element within the grouping of agricultural buildings.

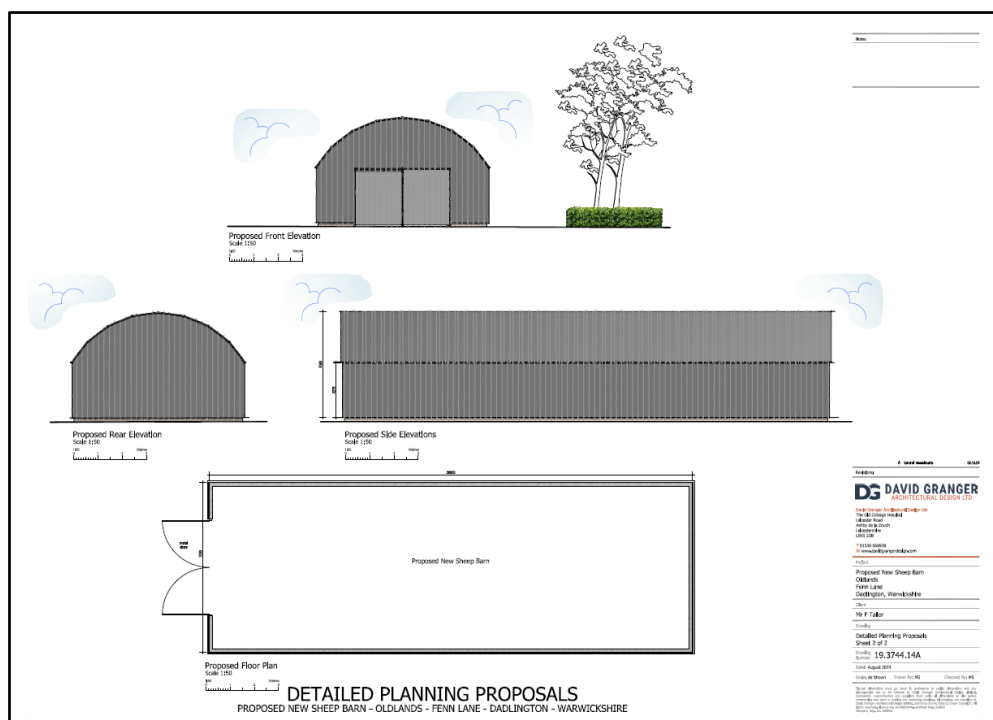
In this context, the applicant has been minded revise their submission, this time seeking a sheep barn for the purposes of improved animal husbandry. The structure is a considerable improvement on the previous submission that was refused.

3.4

Seen below is the present proposal. All of the principle issues relating to the previous refusal have been addressed. The building's width / depth has been reduced from 20 to 7 meters and the overall length is now 20 meters, which is a 50% reduction. The footprint has been reduced from 800 m² to 140 m² which is a substantial amendment that takes into account the Planning Inspectors comments.

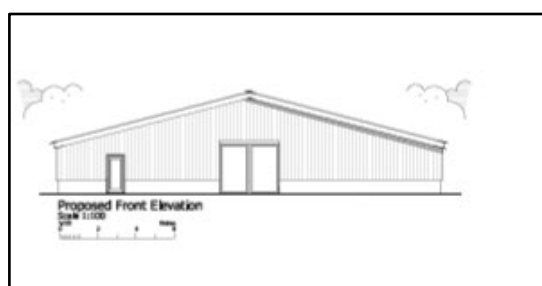
The material design code is simple; corrugated metal with a dutch barn style curved roof, consistent with typical, modestly scaled agricultural buildings. The structure that was previously refused had an industrial agricultural appearance, whereas the revised scheme seen below is more resonant of traditional farming practices.

The doors are side hinged, rather than up-and-over roller shutter doors which would be out of character for the historic setting.

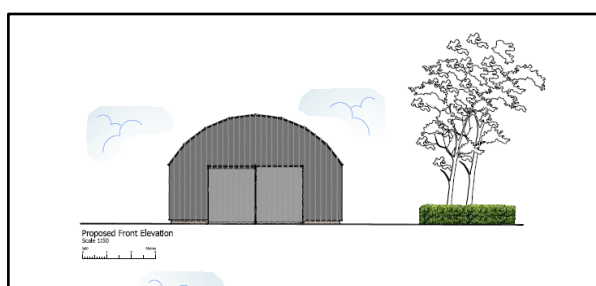


3.5

As seen below, the most concerning element of the refused scheme was the end walls / gable width. This would have been visible from the vantage points referenced by the Planning Inspector. The refused / revised schemes are shown side-by-side to demonstrate the substantial improvement of the present proposal.



Refused Scheme



Revised Scheme

3.6

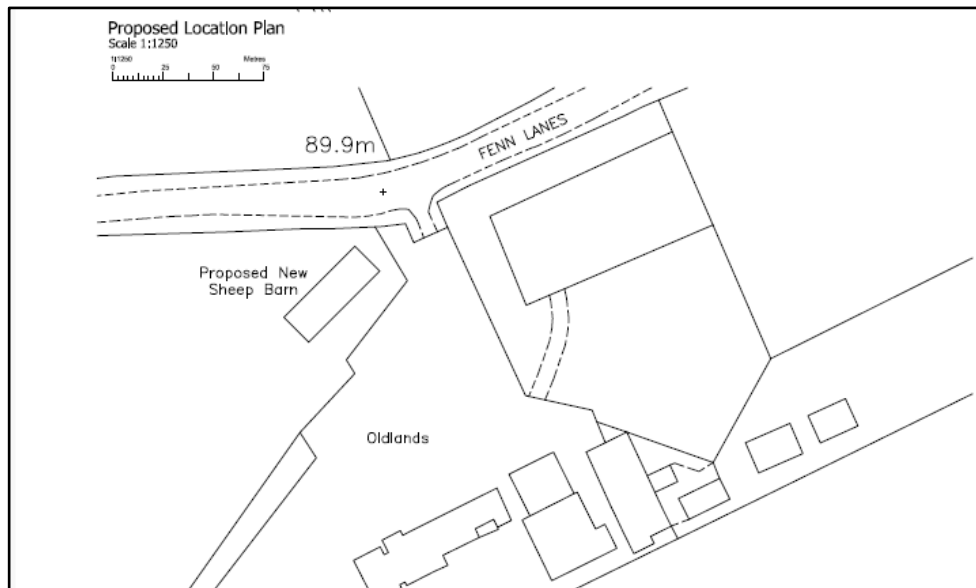
Finally, with regards to the overall plan form of the proposal, the comments of the Planning Inspector under APP/K2420/W/21/3286965 must also be noted:

Moreover, the menage would not be within the existing cluster of buildings at Oldlands, but rather would be adjacent to it, extending that group eastwards. As a result, it would not be

consolidating the group or tucked within a collection of buildings that already exists, but would be increasing the effect that development at Oldlands would have on the landscape'

The revised site plan is shown below; the proposed new sheep barn would not extend the built form of the farm complex outwardly either to the east or west. The proposed site is located in close proximity to the outdoor menage and is also heavily screened from Fenn Lanes by mature hedgerow planting and trees.

The footprint is clearly of a more relatable scale to the surrounding buildings and does not appear an incongruous element as the previous scheme.



4.0 Conclusion

4.1

In summary, the HIA has summarised the ongoing historiographical debate surrounding the precise location of the Battle of Bosworth, which was deemed a material consideration in the scheme that was refused under 20/01003/FUL. It has been found, in line with the Planning Inspectors comments, that this has not yet been conclusively determined.

Notwithstanding this, there is no attempt in this HIA to refute any claim that the application site is an important component of the Registered Battlefield. There is no reason to question this, because the scheme that has been submitted is considered to be a sensitive addition that relates to small-scale farming practices, rather than the previous refused scheme that would have affected an appearance of industrial scale use. Its form, mass and scale is consistent with historic farming practices and it features a simple design code that would not be unduly prominent when viewed from Fenn Lanes or the rear of the farm complex.

Any identified harm that is caused to the setting of the Registered Battlefield would be deemed less than substantial, at the lower end of the scale. Any such harm is deemed to be counterbalanced by the improved functions for animal husbandry, thus securing the economic longevity of the farming business.

Sources

British Newspaper Archive: Leamington Spa Trader (1872) / Hinckley & Bosworth Courier

Foard, G. & Curry, A., 2013. Bosworth 1485: A Battlefield Rediscovered. Oxford: Oxbow Books.

Heritage Impact Assessment: JHM Planning November 2020

National Library of Scotland, Historic Maps: OS Maps 25" Series 1880-1927

Planning Appeal: APP/K2420/W/21/3286965 Planning Inspectorate 2020