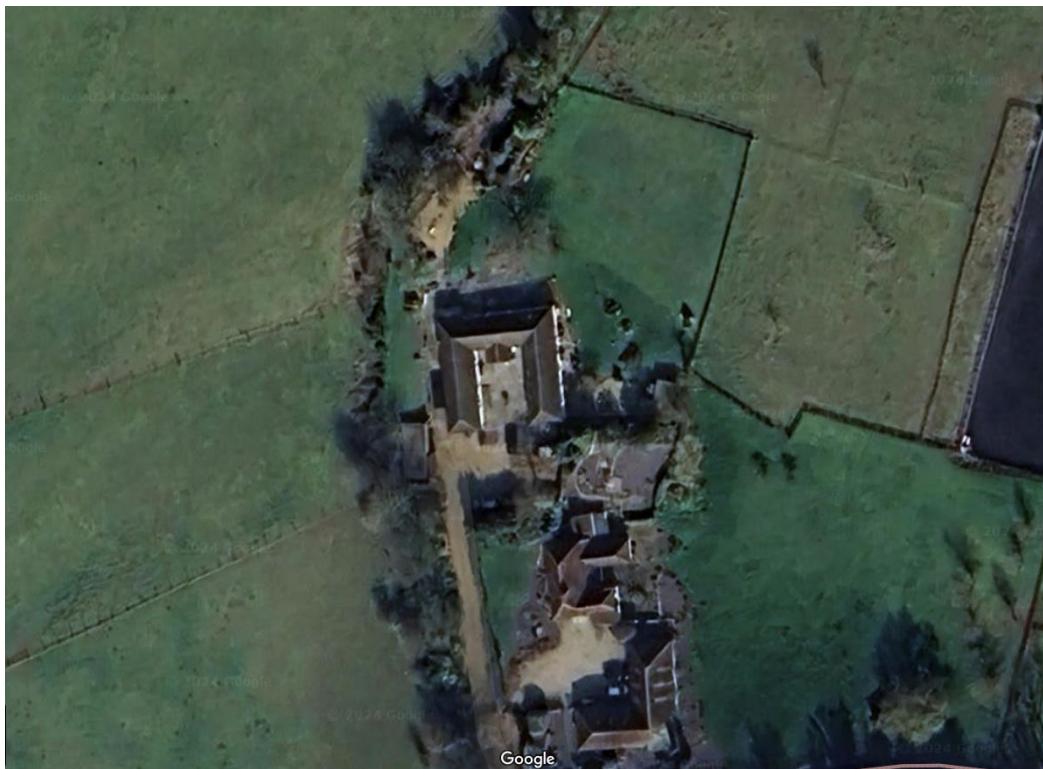


ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE FOR THE COACH HOUSE, WEST DOWN FARM, SHIPLEY HILLS ROAD, MEOPHAM (DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE ONLY)

JOB NO: 439-21



LINDA RIPLEY

SEPTEMBER 2024

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## **1 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 AUTHORITY AND REFERENCES**

Hutton + Rostron Environmental Investigations Limited were appointed to prepare an Assessment of Significance (desk top research) focused on West Down Farm and The Coach House, Meopham in accordance with the completed order form received from Liz Fitzgerald of Barker Parry on behalf of Linda Ripley by email on 29 August 2024 [10:27]. For the purpose of orientation in this report, the principal elevation of the building was taken as facing south towards the driveway access

### **1.2 AIM**

The aim of this assessment of significance is to use documentary evidence to better understand the history of West Down Farm and the significance of West Down Farmhouse, which is grade II listed, and the relationship, ownership and interest ancillary buildings such as The Coach House have held in context and towards that significance

### **1.3 LIMITATIONS**

The assessment of significance was based on desk top research only. No site visit has been undertaken to West Down Farmhouse or The Coach House to understand the physical interests of the building and interests of their fabric at this time. The assessment takes account of documentary evidence which was publicly accessible and/or requested from publicly accessible sources available at the time of reporting and is made without prejudice to the possibility that further documentary evidence could come to light in the future. H+R cannot be held liable for not taking account of information not publicly accessible or not provided by the client

### **1.4 H+R STAFF ON SITE**

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### **1.5 PERSONNEL CONTACTED**

Linda Ripley  
Liz Fitzgerald

## 2 ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

### 2.1 ASSESSING SIGNIFICANCE: SUMMARY

- 1 The earliest sourced documentary reference to West Down, Meopham goes back to the 13<sup>th</sup> century whereby records held within Canterbury Cathedral Archives and Library refer to Godfrey of West Down [in Meopham]; Henry, son of Godfrey of West Down. Documentary material dating back to the late 16<sup>th</sup> century and held in Surrey Records Office references West Down Farm associated with 100 acres of land in Meopham and Ridley. West Down Farm is clearly a long-established identifiable landholding going back to the medieval period. The residence historically associated with West Down Farm is West Down Farmhouse which is located off Shipley Hills Road. It is a timber frame building purported to date back to the 16<sup>th</sup> century and originally a hall house. A former farm building, which have since being converted to a separate dwelling known as The Coach House, is situated 20m to the north of West Down Farmhouse and is late 19<sup>th</sup> century in origin
- 2 In the 19<sup>th</sup> century and into the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century it is evident that West Down Farm did not exist as a stand-alone farm but was part of an estate holding. In 1840 Tithe map records identify West Down Farmhouse and the land around it as owned by William Smith-Masters but occupied by George Best; in 1840 West Down Farm was a tenanted farm. The Smith-Masters family owned the Camer Estate, Meopham which comprised of a country house, Camer House (17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> century), and a c. 400-acre estate. However, West Down Farm did not stay with the Camer Estate and by 1881 it does not feature on the Camer Estate map as held in Surrey Records Office. By the 1880s West Down Farm is instead associated with the Idley Farm Estate (later known as the Idleigh Farm Estate). Idley Farm and lands lie to the west of West Down within the adjacent parish of Ash. When the Idley Court Estate was put up for sale in 1890 West Down Farm was included in that sale
- 3 Throughout the Victorian era, census records show that West Down Farmhouse is never occupied by a farmer (as a principal landowner or main tenant) but a succession of every changing tenants who were farmer workers, specifically agricultural labourers or carters; in the Victorian era the occupants of West Down Farmhouse were humble estate workers who tenanted the property. Map evidence corresponding with this period shows that the agricultural building to the north of the farmhouse, now called The Coach House, was entirely rebuilt c.1870s; on the 1869 map buildings to the north of West Down Farmhouse present an 'L' footprint built up against the adjacent farm track but on the 1895 plan building present a 'U' footprint and is set slightly back from the farm track. This agricultural building would not have been subordinate to or solely dependent on West Down Farmhouse and the farm workers who lived there but would have served the wider estate holding of the Idley Farm Estate. Map evidence also indicates the farmhouse sat within its own curtilage (this is particular evident on OS 1908 and OS 1937) with boundaries providing separation between the farmhouse dwelling and the agricultural building to the north, now called The Coach House, which was serving a wider estate holding
- 4 In 1922 the Idleigh Court Farm Estate (the spelling having changed from Idley to Idleigh) is put up for sale by auction. In a newspaper advertisement about the auction the Estate is described as covering an area of 419 acres and being a mixed farm that includes Idleigh Court, a Georgian residence of six bedrooms, farm buildings and cottages and 'an

*attractive farm known as West Downs covering 71 acres with picturesque farmhouse and well-built range of farm buildings*'. Through this sale the Idleigh Court Farm Estate is broken up and sold in lots. Information within the Land Registry pertaining to titles associated with West Down specifically West Down Farmhouse (title number K843762), The Coach House (title number K445638) access (title number TT101258) land to the east (title number K843762) show all these parts of the Idleigh Court Farm Estate were sold by Charles Ernest Godfrey-Jull to Herbert James Cologne on 26 August 1925. The Cologne family name is associated with West Down Farm from 1925 until the mid-1970s, until Herbert Edward Cologne of West Down Farm, Meopham passes away on 15 March 1975 (66). Herbert Edward's wife Kathleen Grace Cologne (whom he married in 1950) passed away at the end of 1975 (53) and his parents Herbert James and Emily Cologne died in 1958 and 1960 respectively

- 5 When the Cologne family purchased West Down Farm it would appear they were living at the farmhouse. In the 1939 register West Down Farm is occupied by Herbert E Cologne (31) a farmer and stock breeder and his parents Herbert J and Emily Cologne. No documentary material has been sourced to verify the farmhouses occupancy through the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, but evidence does suggest by c. 1970 the farmhouse was vacant and uninhabitable, and nobody was living there. Notes made in a site meeting by Council Officers dated 11 March 1970 describe the farmhouse as being of '*rotting damp fabric*' and is '*considerably out of plumb throughout, surrounded by undergrowth and hidden from the road*'. They were advised that LBC would be needed for demolition and planning for a new home and that '*we should not be advising to refuse LBC for demo*'. Corresponding with this visit are two partial photographs of the building taken through vegetation and if these were the only aspect that could be photographed, they indicate a building in a poor condition and support the supposition that the farm building was vacant by c.1970
- 6 West Down Farmhouse had been 'provisionally listed' by the Ministry of Housing and Local Government by 1965 and coinciding with this a planning application, TH/6/65/31, was submitted for its demolition followed by erection of a replacement farmhouse (this pre-dating the notes regarding its demolition made in 1970 and referenced in paragraph 5 above). The applicant was W Brett c/o Messrs Bower and Ransom of 15-19 Cavendish Place London. In a letter dated 13 July 1965 from the Ministry of Housing and Local Government to the County Planning Officer they stating that demolition would be regrettable and that '*every possibility of preserving it will be fully explored*'. It was also suggested that '*it may be that the owner could be persuaded to build nearby and to use the existing building for another purpose or put it up for sale to someone interested in its preservation*'. Planning application was undetermined and eventually withdrawn but somewhat mysteriously one of the reasons it was not determined as stated by the County Planning Officer in correspondence dated 28 September 1965 was because '*there is some doubt about the ownership of the property and for this reason the District Council has deferred consideration of the application pending receipt of further information*'. To what if any further information was received cannot be substantiated as the only documentation associated with planning application TH/6/65/31 held by Gravesham Borough Council within the planning history is the register of application
- 7 West Down Farmhouse was formally listed in November 1966. Subsequently in 1970 a listed building consent application TH/6/70/223 was submitted to Kent County Council for the carrying out of alterations and extensions to West Down Farmhouse. The applicant was R J Mannion Esq of Elm Cottage, Fawkham, Dartford. The application was approved subject to condition concerning parking and garaging with a condition being applied because '*the development without the provision of adequate accomadation for parking or garaging of private motor cars is likely to lead to carparking inconvenient to other road users and detrimental to amenity*'. The fact the applicant was a Mr Mannion and not the Colognes and the fact there were potential issues with parking and garaging is a very strong indication that by c.1970 West Down Farmhouse was not in the same ownership as the adjacent farm buildings; if West Down Farmhouse was in the same ownership as

its adjacent farm buildings at this time then parking and garaging wouldn't have been an issue as the farm buildings could have provided that provision. Unfortunately, the only documentation associated with planning application TH/6/70/223 held by Gravesham Borough Council within the planning history is the decision notice

- 8 In 1972 Mr H E Cologne puts in a planning application, TH/7/72/411, to part convert the farm buildings to the north of West Down Farmhouse to a dwelling house. This shows that despite a R J Mannion having an interest, assume ownership, in West Down Farmhouse the Cologne family still have an interest at West Down Farm and own the farm building and land. Planning application TH/7/72/411 was initially refused but approval to part convert the farm building to a dwelling was granted at appeal on 11 June 1974. In December 1974 an application was submitted to discharge the conditions applied to the approval. At this time the farm building is stated to be a 'vacant stables' and Mr H E Cologne is cited as the owner of building living in a caravan at West Down Farm. The site plan indicates the vacant stables and land ownership at West Down Farm but clearly exclude altogether West Down Farmhouse from his ownership. In March 1975 Mr H E Cologne dies and his wife dies later the same year, presumably they never had the opportunity to realise the residential conversion of the farm building or occupy the dwelling created. Meanwhile the Brett family who had come to own West Down Farmhouse subsequently sell the farmhouse to the Cornwell family on 27 July 1978 having acquired 'The Coach House'
- 9 To date West Down Farmhouse functions as a dwelling house but it is no longer a farmhouse that provides the residence to a farmer or agricultural worker working the surrounding land. Since Mr Mannion secured listed building consent to renovate the farmhouse in 1970, which included alteration and extension, there has been further development within its immediate garden setting executed by later owners and gentrifying its setting. Within the immediate garden setting of West Down Farmhouse the provision of a building serving as a garage, tack room and loose boxes was erected following planning permission granted in 1981 and this building was later refurbished and converted into ancillary accommodation under schemes approved in 2005 and most recently 2021. Meanwhile after 'The Coach House' was created, following residential conversion of part of farm buildings achieved by planning permission secured by Mr Cologne c. 1974, there has been further development by later owners. Specifically, in 1997 planning permission was granted for parts of the building left unconverted to also be converted to residential use. West Down Farmhouse and 'The Coach House' are buildings in separate ownership and have clearly been in separate ownership during the late 20<sup>th</sup> century and throughout the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The date at which these building's fell into separate ownership is not explicitly clear and can only be presumed. However, planning records strongly indicate they were in separate ownership by 1970 and possibly by 1965, but fair conclusion would be that separation occurred at some time in the late 1960s

## 2.2 ASSESSING SIGNIFICANCE: STATUTORY DESIGNATIONS

### 2.2.1 Listed Status

- 1 The Coach House is not listed in its own right
- 2 West Down Farmhouse (south of The Coach House) was afforded statutory protection as a listed building on 21 November 1966. It is recognised as a grade II listed building. It is identified by the following list description (as copied from the NHLE):

*C16 timber-framed "Hall" house. Much restored and modernised. Ground floor brick faced, first floor weatherboarded and tarred. Tile roof hipped at north end. Casement windows. First floor entrance door. Internally ingle fireplace, beams and parts of original framing and roof timbers*

## **2.2.2 Conservation Area Designation**

- 1 West Down Farmhouse and The Coach House are not located in a conservation area
- 2 There are three conservation areas within the parish of Meopham which cover specific historical focal points within the parish. These are identified as Hook Green Conservation Area, Meopham Green Conservation Area and Meopham The Street Conservation Area

## **2.3 ASSESSING SIGNIFICANCE: PLANNING HISTORY**

- 1 There are four determined planning or listed building consent applications under the online planning records specific to The Coach House (as appearing on Gravesham Public Access System) these being:
  - (i) 20221350: Dec 2022. REFUSED. APPEAL DISMISSED. Erection of single storey side extension. The documentation identifies The Coach House as being in separate ownership to the listed building, Westdown Farmhouse. Both the officer report and appeal, however, conclude the Coach House to be afforded statutory protection curtilage to Westdown Farmhouse Applicant: Mr & Mrs Ripley
  - (ii) 19970347 May 1997. Approved. Conversion of former cow shed to annex to the coach house comprising of lounge, bedroom with en-suite study/guest bedroom and utility. Under this scheme the north and west ranges already served as dwelling 'bungalow' and this would allow for the remainder of the building, the east wing to become residential also. The documentation identifies The Coach House to be in separate ownership to the listed building, West Down Farmhouse. Applicant: Mr L M Brett
  - (iii) 19750028. Dec 1974. Approval of conditions in pursuant of appeal TH/6/72/411. On plan the building is described as 'vacant stables' The documentation identifies The Coach House to be in separate ownership to the listed building, West down Farmhouse. Mr Cologne who was living in a caravan at that time. Applicant: Mr H E Cologne. (Appendix A, Fig. 21-24)
  - (iv) 1972 (Original ref: TH/6/72/411) June 1972. Refused. Allowed at appeal on 11 June 1974. Conversion of stables in to living accomadation. Application submitted to and dealt with by Kent County Council. Neither the LPA or Inspector gave any consideration to the farm building being protected as a listed building. Applicant and appeal: Mr H E Cologne
- 2 There are seven determined planning or listed building consent applications under the online planning records associated with the listed building (and property) known as Westdown Farmhouse (as appearing on Gravesham Public Access System) these being:
  - (i) 20210734. June 2021. Approved. Conversion of Annex building at Westdown Farm to an ancillary residential annex including proposed external alterations. The documentation identifies Westdown Farmhouse and the adjacent building The Coach House as being in separate ownership. Applicant: Mr & Mrs Stewart
  - (ii) 20110425. May 2011. Approved. Lawful Development Certificate for the existing single storey front extension. Applicant: Mr John Stewart
  - (iii) 20051113 & 20051114. Dec 2005, Approved. Listed Building Consent and Planning permission for conversion of the garage and stable block into a study office, It room, library and w.c and conversion of roof space into a gym, changing room/sauna

shower room involving external alterations. The documentation identifies Westdown Farmhouse and the adjacent building The Coach House as being in separate ownership. Applicant: Mrs Sylvia Stewart

- (iv) 20050960. Nov 2005. Approved. Concern use of land to the east for horses. Applicant: Sylvia Stewart
- (v) 20050683. Aug 2005. Approved. Concerns structures on land to the east for horses. Applicant: Mrs Sylvia Stewart
- (vi) 20021029. Dec 2002. Approved. Demolition and rebuilding of chimney stack. The documentation identifies Westdown Farmhouse and the adjacent building The Coach House as being in separate ownership. Applicant: Mr & Mrs J Stuart
- (vii) 19810967. Dec 1981. Approved. Erection of single storey building comprising of treble garage, tack room and three loose boxes at the front of the existing dwelling. The documentation appears to identify Westdown Farmhouse and the adjacent building The Coach House as being in separate ownership. Committee report states that '*the original farm buildings, including stables, sited to the rear of the farmhouse were sold off following the grant of planning permission at appeal in 1974 for their conversion to living accommodation*'. Applicant: Mr & Mrs R Cornwell
- TH/6/70/223. 1970, Approved. Listed building consent application submitted to Kent County Council for the carrying out of alterations and extensions to West Down Farmhouse. Applicant: R J Mannion Esq of Elm Cottage, Fawkham, Dartford. (Appendix A, Fig. 19 -20)
- (viii) TH/6/65/31. 1965. Withdrawn. Planning application for demolition of farmhouse and its replacement with a new farmhouse. Register of application document only. Stating proposal to 'for erection of farmhouse to replace existing to be demolished, West Down. Shipley Hills, Meopham. Applicant: Mr Brett Esq c/o Messrs Bower and Ransom of 15-19 Cavendish Place London (Appendix A, Fig. 12)

3 There is one determined planning or listed building consent applications under the online planning records specific to West Down Farm but not either the Coach House or Farmhouse (as appearing on Gravesham Public Access System) this being:

- (i) 19540119 (original ref. TH/6/54/99). April 1954. Approved. Erection of a bungalow for housing of a farmworker. Application submitted to and dealt with by Strood Urban District Council. Paperwork states the applicant is the owner of West Down which is an 88-acre farm-holding. Applicant Mrs E Cologne

## 2.4 ASSESSING SIGNIFICANCE: DOCUMENTARY RECORDS

### 2.4.1 Books and archives

- 1 **British History Online (BHO):** West Down Farmhouse or the farm has no mention is not referenced
- 2 **Pevsner:** West Down Farmhouse is not referenced.
- 3 **Kent Archives and Local History:** There are nearly 600 records specific to Meopham and it is not possible to review these all for the purpose of this research. Key references to documents that relate to West Down or the estates under which it fell, Camer Estate and Idley Court Estate, are as follows

- Ref U1127/T10 1585-1783. Referenced to 100 acres in Meopham and Ridley. Referencing West Down Farm and transfer of annuities (Rockall to Masters)
- Ref: U2799/T1/6/1. 1877 Counterpart lease of Idley and West Downs Farm Thomas Andrus to Henry Phelps for 14 years
- Ref U1127. Camer estate records including accounts and ledgers. Ref U1127/P35: 1881 estate map of the Camer Estate whereby West Down Farm does not appear on the estate map indicating it was no longer part of the estate at that time
- Ref U2396/E17 1890 (19 Sept) Sales particulars for sale of Idley Court Estate with farmhouse, four cottages, farm buildings and containing 410 acres. Sold as Lot 1
- Ref U2799/E2/2. 1890 Sales particulars for the Idley Estate, Meopham, Ash and Ridley (Andrus family)
- Ref U55/T4. 1893 lease of Idley Farm with map.
- Ref U55/T4. 1893 lease of Ridley Court Estate with map
- Ref U55/SP/2842. 1906 sales particulars of land in Ash, Meopham and Ridley
- U1448/B13/6. Register of properties for sale (1914-1927). Business books of H. G Henrey Auctioneer and valuer. Recording include sale of Idley Court Farm
- Ref C/PL/2/AHI-54/31. Correspondence and records dating between 1965-1970 specific to West Down Farmhouse including letters about its proposed demolition and 2 no. associated photographs. One letter dated 13 July 1965 between Ministry of Housing and Local Government and The County Planning Officer refers to West Down Farmhouse being provisionally listed and how it would be regrettable if it would be demolished suggesting that '*it may be that the owner could be persuaded to build nearby and to use the existing building for another purpose or put it up for sale to someone interested in its preservation*'. A letter dated 28 September 1965 from County Planning Officer to Ministry of Housing and Local Government saying that application TH/6/65/31 has not been determined as there is doubt about the ownership. Noted and photographs pertaining to a visit to the building on 11 March 1970. (Appendix A, Fig. 13 - 18)

4 **National Archives Catalogue:** There are over 1300 records specific to Meopham and it is not possible to review these all for the purpose of this research. Key documents that relate to West Down or the estate under which it fell, Camer Estate, are as follows

- Ref CC/C-PL/2/AHI-54/31 West Down, Meopham. Reference to Kent County Council Planning file 1965-70 held by Kent History and Library Centre
- Ref NRA 11463 Deeds, family and estate papers for Camer, Meopham. 16<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> century held by Kent History and Library Centre
- Ref CCA-DCc-ChAnt/M/. Multiple 13th century documents of Godfrey of West Down [in Meopham]; Henry, son of Godfrey of West Down. Dating to mid-13th century and held by Canterbury Cathedral Archives and Library

5 **Historic England archives:** There are no specific references to West Down Farm, Meopham

## 2.4.2 Cartographic records

- 1 Historic maps can provide an understanding about the development of landscape and settlement morphology, street patterns, street name and sometimes accurate building footprints. The following maps are insightful when researching Bragmans Farm House:
  - (i) **1798.** Eynford (Kent). The footprint of buildings in the location of West Down are shown indicatively on the map. (Appendix A, Fig. 1)
  - (ii) **1819 & 1820.** Map of the county of Kent by C Greenwood. West Down is named on the map as Westdown Farm and depicted indicatively by multiple building footprints
  - (iii) **1840.** Tithe Map. West Down is not named but the house is clearly identifiable and there are barns to its north with outbuildings around the house. The map accords with parcels of land identified as 926 (Bonn field), 927 (orchard) and 928 (Farmhouse, outbuildings and gardens) all owned by William Smith-Masters and occupied by George Best. The footprint of the farm buildings do not reflect the footprint of The Coach House which stands today. (Appendix A, Fig. 2)
  - (iv) **1869.** Surveyed 1864 to 1867. OS County Series 1 inch map. West Down named on the map. The house is shown in footprint and the building to the north has an 'L' footprint with buildings fronting the farm lane. The footprint of the building to the north does not reflect the footprint of 'The Coach House' which stands today. (Appendix A, Fig. 3)
  - (v) **1896.** Revised 1895. OS County Series 25inch map. West Down named on the map. The house is shown in footprint and the 'U' shaped building is present to the north of the house which is comparable with the footprint of 'The Coach House' which stands today. There is indication of boundary walls separating the coach house from the house. (Appendix A, Fig. 4)
  - (vi) **1908.** Revised 1907. OS County Series 25inch map. West Down named on the map. The farmhouse is shown in footprint and the 'U' shaped building is present to the north of the farmhouse which is comparable with the footprint of 'The Coach House' which stands today. There is indication of boundary walls separating the building to the north from the farmhouse the arrangement having changed since the 1896 map was published. (Appendix A, Fig. 5)
  - (vii) **1937.** Revised 1936 OS County Series 25inch map. West Down named on the map. The farmhouse is shown in footprint and the 'U' shaped building is present to the north of the farmhouse which is comparable with the footprint of 'The Coach House' which stands today. There is indication of boundary walls separating the building to the north from the farmhouse, the arrangement having changed since the 1896 map was published and changed again since 1908 map was published. (Appendix A, Fig. 6)
  - (viii) **1964.** Revised 1962.National grid map. Map with West Down named on the map. The house is shown in footprint and the 'U' shaped coach house is present to the north of the house which is comparable with the footprint of the building which stands today. There is indication of boundary walls separating the coach house from the house the arrangement remaining similar to that in 1937. (Appendix A, Fig. 7)

## 2.4.3 Census records

- 1 Census records and building register information yield a little knowledge on the occupants of the property from 1841 through to 1939. The information allows an understanding of who lived at the property, their profession, occasionally the size of farm

holding, allows some assumptions to be made of occupant/building status and provides a cross reference with trade directory information and other documentary sources. The information gathered from these sources is as follows:

- (i) **1840** Tithe Terrier (for Meopham) states West Down is owned by William Smith-Masters and occupied by George Best. *William Smith-Masters owned Camer Park and the Camer Park estate.* The 1839 Tithe Terrier (for Ash) shows Idley Farm (as named) is owned by Andrus & Swaisland and occupied by John Swaisland.
- (ii) **1841** Westdown (as named) and possibly divided into 2 dwelling with 1 no. dwelling occupied by Edward Best (50) bailiff, Lucy (45) wife and 1 no. dwelling occupied by John Matthews (26) broom maker and 4 children (Note: In 1841 Idley Farm, Ash is occupied by John Swaisland, farmer)
- (iii) **1851** West Down (as named) occupied by William Martin (27) farmer labourer, Either (26) wife and 4 children of which 2 were labourers on the farm plus 1 visitor (130 labourer)
- (iv) **1861** West Down (as named) occupied by Richard Stevans (23) agricultural labourer, Mary (20) wife and 3 children plus 1 boarder (20) agricultural labourer (21)
- (v) **1871** West Down House (as named) occupied by James Martin (30) Farm servant, Sarah (26) wife and 5 no children plus 1 boarder (20) farmer servant
- (vi) **1881** Westdown Farm (as named) occupied by William Parker (25) agricultural labourer, Mary (20) wife, 1 child (9 months) plus 1 nephew (14) agricultural labourer. (Note: In 1881 Idley Farm, Ash is occupied by Henry Philips farmer of 435 acres)
- (vii) **1891** West Down Farm (as named) occupied by William Reeves (36) agricultural labourer, Mary (25) wife and 3 children plus 1 brother (26) agricultural labourer. (Note: In 1891 Idley Farm House, Ash is occupied by William Andrus Manager of Farm)
- (viii) **1901** West Down (as named) occupied by Williams Reeves (47) Shepherd (worker), Mary (33) wife, son (16) carter on farm (worker) and 7 children under 15 plus a brother (39) farm labourer and worker
- (ix) **1911** West Downs (as named) occupied by Robert John Hawkins (27) waggoner on farm and worker, Annie (31) wife and 5 children under 10 plus a boarder (18) farm labourer. On the cover the house is referred to as West Down Cottage
- (x) **1939** West Down Farm occupied by Herbert E Cologne (31) Farmer and Stock Breeder, Herbert J Cologne (57) Revenue Official Metropolitan Water Board and Emily Cologne (54)

#### 2.4.4 Historic newspaper references

- 1 West Down Farm is referenced in historic newspaper records as follows:
  - (i) **1890:** 13 September. Advert for the sale of the Idley Court Estate covering the parishes of Meopham, Ridley and Ash. (Appendix A, Fig. 8)
  - (ii) **1922:** 6 May. Kent Messenger & Gravesend Telegraph. Notice of sale of Idleigh Court Farm Estate. The estate covered 419 acres land across Meopham, Ridley and Ash. It included '*the attractive farm known as West Downs (covering an area of 71 acres) with picturesque farm house and well-built range of farm buildings.*' (Appendix A, Fig. 9)

- (iii) **1943:** 10 September. Maidstone Telegraph. Notice of Kent War Agricultural Executive Committee of lands to let with invitation to apply for 3-year tenancy. West Down Farm, Meopham is one area of land (80 acres) it being stated for let
- (iv) **1944:** 7 April. Kentish Express. Notice of Kent War Agricultural Executive Committee of lands to let with invitation to apply for 3-year tenancy. West Down Farm, Meopham is one area of land it being stated for let without a dwelling house or buildings
- (v) **1947:** 22 August Kent & Sussex Courier. Notice of Kent War Agricultural Executive Committee of lands to occupy on an annual basis. Part West Down, Meopham is one area of land (79 acres) with shed referenced for let
- (vi) **1970:** 28 July. South Eastern Gazette. Local Authority Notice of 'proposals to carry out renovations and additions at Westdowns, Shipley Hills Lane, Meopham. Application made by R J Mannion for listed building consent to renovate and extend the building. Application made to Strood Rural District Council. (Appendix A, Fig. 10)
- (vii) **1970:** 31 July Maidstone Telegraph. Local Authority Notice of 'proposals to carry out renovations and additions at Westdowns, Shipley Hills Lane, Meopham'. Application made by R J Mannion for listed building consent to renovate and extend the building. Application made to Strood Rural District Council
- (viii) **1975:** 18 March Kent Evening Post. Obituary of Herbert Edward Cologne of West Down Farm, Meopham who passed away on 15 March 1975. (Appendix A, Fig. 11)

#### 2.4.5 Photographic records

- 1 **Kent History and Library Centre:** 2 no. photographs dated 11 March 1970 and held within file CC/C-PL/2/AHI-54/31 West Down, Meopham, Kent County Council Planning file 1965-70
- 2 **Historic England's Places Collection:** No photographs of West Down Farm, Meopham in this online collection
- 3 **Images of England:** No photographs of West Down Farm, Meopham in this online collection
- 4 **Francis Firth:** No photographs of West Down Farm, Meopham in this online collection
- 5 **Historic England's Aerial Photo Explorer:** No photographs of West Down Farm, Meopham in this online collection
- 6 **Cambridge Air photos:** No photographs of West Down Farm, Meopham in this online collection

#### 2.4.6 Trade directory search

- 1 Trade directory searches provide no reference to West Court. They provide general information on the village of Meopham including reference to principal landowners. The following references were picked up through a search of trade directories:
  - (i) **1855** Post Office Directory of Essex, Herts and Kent. No reference to West Down. Smith-Masters occupy a handsome mansion called Camer

- (ii) **1882** Kelly's Directory of Kent. No reference to West Down
- (iii) **1903** Kelly's Directory of Kent. No reference to West Down
- (iv) **1913.** Kelly's Directory of Kent. No reference to West Down

# Appendix A

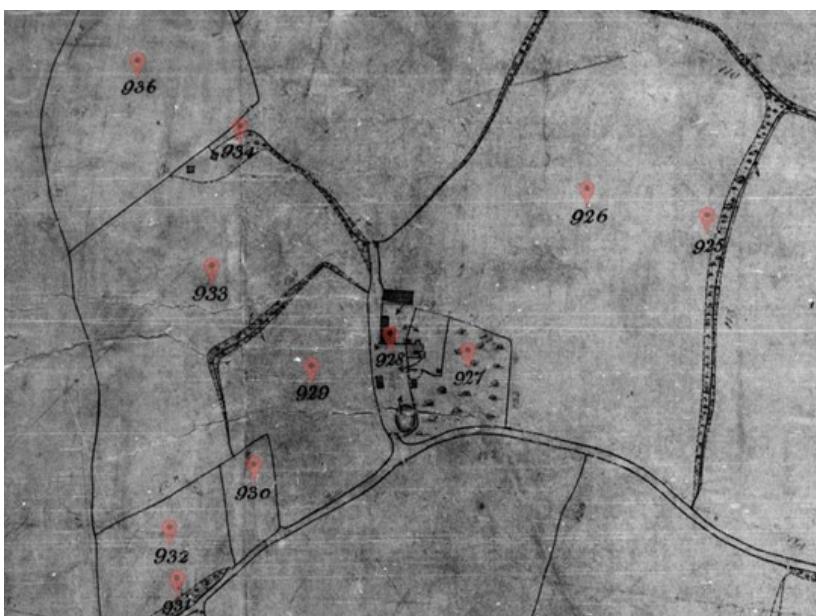


**Fig 1:**

**1798** Eynesford (Kent) map.

West Down is not named. The footprint of buildings in the location of West Down are shown indicatively on the map.

Red arrow points to West Down Farm.



**Fig 2:**

**1840** Tithe map.

West Down is not named but the farmhouse is clearly identifiable and there are buildings to its north with other buildings around the house. The map accords with parcels of land identified as 926 (Bonn field), 927 (orchard) and 928 (Farmhouse, outbuildings and gardens) all owned by William Smith-Masters and occupied by George Best. The footprint of the buildings in the location of 'The Coach House' do not reflect the footprint of 'The Coach House' which stands today.



**The Coach House, West Down Farm, Shipley Hills Road, Meopham**  
Historic Documentary Evidence  
September 2024  
Not to scale



Fig 3:

**1869.** Surveyed 1864 to 1867. OS County Series map 1 inch map.

West Down named on the map. The farmhouse is shown in footprint and the building to the north has an 'L' footprint with buildings fronting the farm lane. The footprint of the building to the north does not reflect the footprint of 'The Coach House' which stands today.



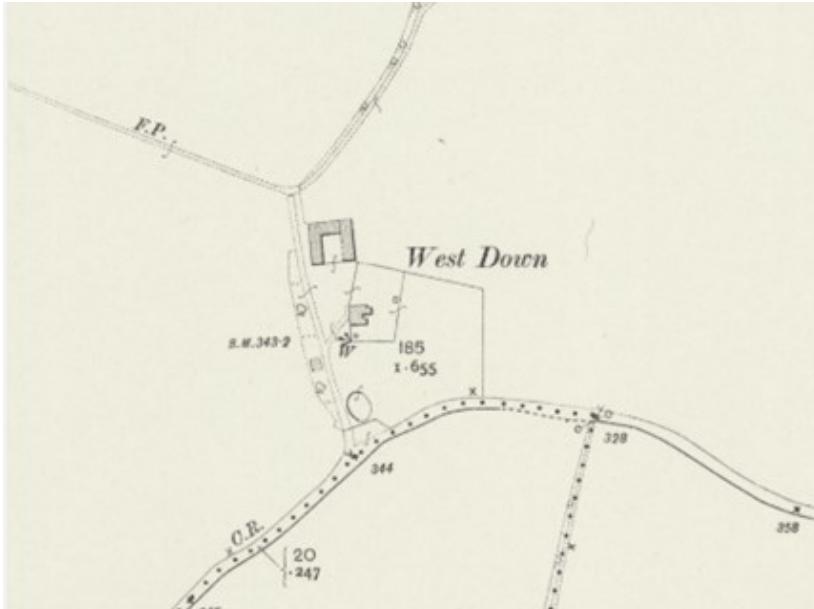
Fig 4:

**1896.** Revised 1895. OS County Series 25inch map.

West Down named on the map. The farmhouse is shown in footprint and a new 'U' shaped building is present to the north of the farmhouse which is comparable with the footprint of 'The Coach House' which stands today. There is indication of boundary walls separating the building to the north from the house.



**The Coach House, West Down Farm, Shipley Hills Road, Meopham**  
 Historic Documentary Evidence  
 September 2024  
 Not to scale



**Fig 5:**

**1908.** . Revised 1907. OS County Series 25inch map.

West Down is named. The farmhouse is shown in footprint and the 'U' shaped building is present to the north of the house which is comparable with the footprint of 'The Coach House' which stands today. There is indication of boundary walls separating the building to the north from the farmhouse, the arrangement of boundaries having changed since the 1896 map was published.



**Fig 6:**

**1937.** Revised 1936 OS County Series 25inch map.

West Down is named. The farmhouse is shown in footprint and the 'U' shaped building is present to the north of the farmhouse which is comparable with the footprint of 'The Coach House' which stands today. There is indication of boundary walls separating the building to the north from the farmhouse, the arrangement having changed since the 1896 map was published and changed again since 1908 map was published.



**The Coach House, West Down Farm, Shipley Hills Road, Meopham**  
 Historic Documentary Evidence  
 September 2024  
 Not to scale



Fig 7:

1964. Revised 1962. National grid map.

West Down is named. The farmhouse is shown in footprint and the 'U' shaped building is present to the north of the house which is comparable with the footprint of 'The Coach House' which stands today. There is indication of boundary walls separating the farm building from the house, the arrangement remaining similar to that in 1937.

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house. A few hundred yards away is another a acres or  
thereabouts. The house is situate within five minutes' walk  
of Cuddington station, ten minutes from Cheshire Kennels,  
forty minutes from Liverpool by L. and N.W. Railway, and  
one hour from Manchester by Cheshire Lines. The tenure  
is Freehold, and free from chief or other charge.

For further particulars apply to **Saxri and Sons, Auctioneers, Estate and Land Agents, 30 Argyle-street, Birkenhead.**

Kent.—Only about twenty-three miles from the metropolis, in an exceptionally healthy and bracing district, two miles from the Meopham and Fawkham stations on the main line of the London, Chatham, and Dover Railway, by which the City and West-end are reached in forty minutes, with the advantage of a railway siding only one mile distant, and within easy access from Sevenoaks, Wrotham, Gravesend, and the market town of Dartford. The **Idley** Court Estate, a desirable agricultural property, possessing considerable residential and sporting advantages, situate in the parishes of Meopham, Bredilig, and **Ash**, within comfortable distance from many of the meets of the Kent foxhounds and the Mid-Kent staghounds, comprising substantially-erected farmhouse, pleasantly placed in an elevated position (about 400ft. above sea level), commanding most extensive and varied views over the surrounding beautiful and well-wooded country, the river Thames, and the hills of Essex. Balliff's house, four cottages, and two sets of modern agricultural buildings, conveniently arranged and well provided with an abundant water supply from wells and sundry tanks, and a compact holding of productive pasture and arable land, a large portion being admirably suited for the growth of fruit, and the remainder being good corn land and well adapted for the breeding and rearing of sheep, with a small area of woodland, the whole affording excellent shooting. With possession.

**MESSRS COBB** will **SELL** by **AUCTION**, at  
the Mart, Tokenhouse-yard, London, EC, on  
Friday, Sept. 19, at Two precisely, in Four Lots, the  
above valuable **FREEHOLD PROPERTY** (nearly the  
whole of which is free from land-tax), covering an area of  
about 410 acres, well farmed by the present ~~occupier~~ for

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The Coach House, West Down Farm, Shipley Hills Road, Meopham  
Historic Documentary Evidence  
September 2024  
Not to scale

Fig 8:

1890. 13 September. Advert for the  
sale of the Idley Court Estate.

<p>Mid Kent Commercial and VACANT POSSESSION completion of the sale may be now. Howlett and Tudford Street, W.C.2; or of the new Maidstone.</p> <p>or Use as an real surroundings. oil. co's gas and heating.</p> <p><b>FORD, KENT</b> Early morning service rooms, bakers and bathrooms business option rooms, hall, music room, com- mon Lodge Stabling uses. Unbrakeable Paddock nearby</p> <p>Course. TION at the St. to 20 St. James' AT. 13th JUNE, at sold. bell. 5. The Sanc- on the Auctioneers, SONS, are. S.W.1.</p> <p><b>MB &amp; SON,</b> <b>MRS. &amp; ESTATE</b> S. 336.</p> <p><b>FURNITURE,</b> <b>OTHER STOCKS,</b> Prancer, Mortgage, process. prepared and and Settlements effected.</p> <p><b>HIGH STREET,</b> RE.</p> <p><b>TON FARM,</b> <b>ASHFORD,</b> tived Station. R. &amp; DICKINSON</p>	
<p><b>WILL hold SALES of STORE STOCKS in the</b> above on 16th and 17th MAY, 1922. Early entries solicited for both Sales. 128, High Street, Tonbridge.</p> <p><b>KENYON</b> <b>WILDE COURT FARM ESTATE.</b> (With Possession on Completion). In the Charming Old Parishes of Meopham, Ridley and Ash, and within easy distance of Railway Facilities. The whole covering an area of about 419 ACRES. To be submitted to AUCTION by <b>MESSRS.</b></p> <p><b>PORTER, PUTT &amp; FLETCHER</b> (Unless Previously Sold)</p> <p><b>AT</b> the Masonic Hall, Wrotham Road, Gravesend, on WEDNESDAY, 17th MAY, 1922, at Three o'clock precisely, in conveniently-arranged Lots, consisting of:-</p> <p><b>THE ATTRACTIVE MIXED FARM,</b> Known as "IDLEIGH COURT," Covering an area of about 147a. 0r. 2p., with the Picturesque <b>GEORGIAN RESIDENCE,</b> Containing two reception rooms, large kitchen and usual offices, six bedrooms, bath- room (a and c). <b>Substantial &amp; Convenient FARM BUILDINGS</b> and Two Brick-built COTTAGES. Also <b>THE ATTRACTIVE FARM.</b> Known as <b>WEST DOWNS,</b> Covering an area of about 71a. 3r. 2p. With Picturesque FARM HOUSE, and Well- built Range of FARM BUILDINGS. Together with about 50 CONVENIENT SIZED LOTS OF EXCELLENT ARABLE &amp; PASTURE LAND, Varying from 1 to 50 ACRES, admirably suited for small Holdings and Market Gardening, with Frontages to existing Parish Roads Company's water supply. Half the Purchase Money can remain on Mortgage repayable by instalments spread over three years at 4% interest. Agents: Messrs. R. Bevir &amp; Son, Woolton House, from whom, or at the Offices of the Auctioneers, Post. 129, 130 and 131, Parrock Street, Gravesend, and 45, Spital Street, Dart- ford. Particulars and Conditions of Sale MAY be obtained.</p> <p><b>PRELIMINARY ADVERTISEMENT.</b> <b>MESSRS.</b> <b>PORTER, PUTT &amp; FLETCHER</b></p>	
<p><b>RESIDENTIAL</b> Situate four miles from Maidstone, within easy distance of the Main Line of from which Town can Within easy reach of the Mid Kent Stage Fox House</p> <p><b>THE IMPOSING</b> <b>ATTRACTIVELY</b> Commanding views over the LINTON</p> <p>A Well-appointed Cos- arranged and handso- ing: Fifteen bedroom reception rooms, 11 bathroom, spacious library, spacious re- with extensive Excellent Modern Sta- Garages. Squash Racquets &amp; Cricket Ground Ornamental Lake &amp; Pool. Well-e Laundry. Beautiful <b>SEVENTEEN</b> Charming Disposed Pleasure Grounds. Palm and Rose Gar- and Rare Conifers. <b>ORNAMENTAL</b> The whole, which is SEATED IN A BE- Covering an 362</p> <p>Also RANTERS FAR</p> <p><b>To be SOLD by</b> on Completion previously disposed Solicitors: Messrs. 30, Old Queen Street Auctioneers.—</p> <p><b>MESSRS. H</b> G and G, Lincoln W.C.2, and Cathed- Amalg</p> <p><b>MESSRS. DANIE</b> 4 and 5, Charles S Lond</p> <p><b>WATERINGBURY</b> <b>MESSRS. LANG</b></p>	
<p><b>WITNESS</b></p> <p><b>TRUSTEES.</b></p> <p>Dated 16th July 1970. HALLETT &amp; CO.</p> <p><b>Forms of Notices and Certi- ficates under Section 15 of the Town and Country Plan- ning Act 1962 and Section 76 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1968. ("Bad Neighbour Development")</b></p> <p><b>PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AT <b>WESTDOWNS</b> SHIPLEY HILLS LANE, MEOPHAM</b></p> <p><b>NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN</b> that application is being made to the Strood Rural District Council by R. J. Mannion, Esq., for planning permission in re- spect of renovation and addition to the existing dwelling and cesspool drainage.</p>	

Fig 9:

1922. 6 May. Kent Messenger & Gravesend Telegraph. Notice of sale of Idleigh Court Farm Estate. The estate covered 419 acres land across Meopham, Ridley and Ash. It included 'the attractive farm known as West Downs (covering an area of 71 acres) with picturesque farm house and well-built range of farm buildings'

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Fig 10:

1970. 28 July. South Eastern Gazette. Local Authority Notice of 'proposals to carry out renovations and additions' at Westdowns, Shipley Hills Lane, Meopham. Application made by R J Mannion for listed building consent to renovate and extend the building. Application made to Strood Rural District Council.



The Coach House, West Down Farm, Shipley Hills Road, Meopham  
Historic Documentary Evidence  
September 2024  
Not to scale



Fig 11:

1975. 18 March. Kent Evening Post. Obituary of Herbert Edward Cologne of West Down Farm, Meopham who passed away on 15 March 1975.

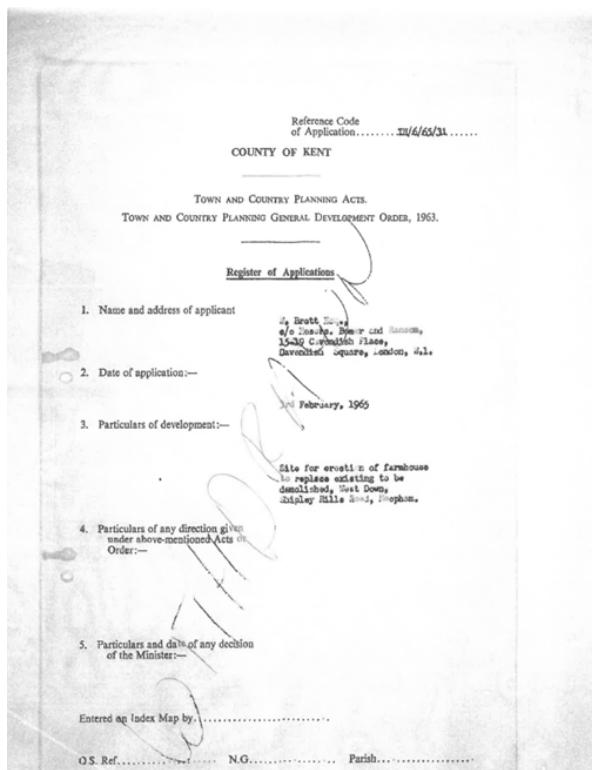


Fig 12:

1965. Gravesham Borough Council Historic Planning Records. Register of applications document for application TH/6/65/31 specific to West Down, Shipley Hills and proposals for 'demolition of farmhouse and its replacement with a new farmhouse'. Applicant is stated as Mr Brett Esq.



The Coach House, West Down Farm, Shipley Hills Road, Meopham  
Historic Documentary Evidence  
September 2024  
Not to scale

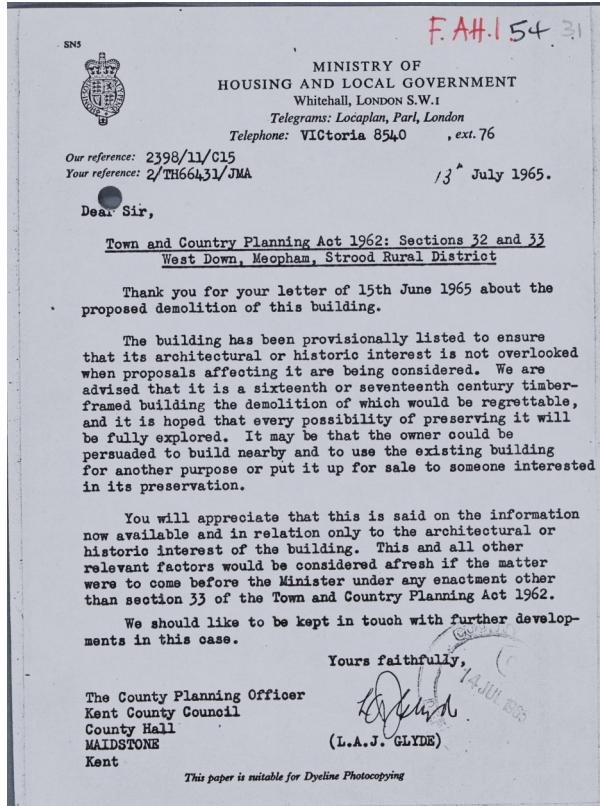


Fig 13:

**1965. 13 July. Kent Archives and Local History. Ref C/PL/2/AHI-54/31.** Letter from Ministry of Housing and Local Government and The County Planning Officer refers to West Down Farmhouse being provisionally listed and how it would be regrettable if it would be demolished suggesting that '*it may be that the owner could be persuaded to build nearby and to use the existing building for another purpose or put it up for sale to someone interested in its preservation*'

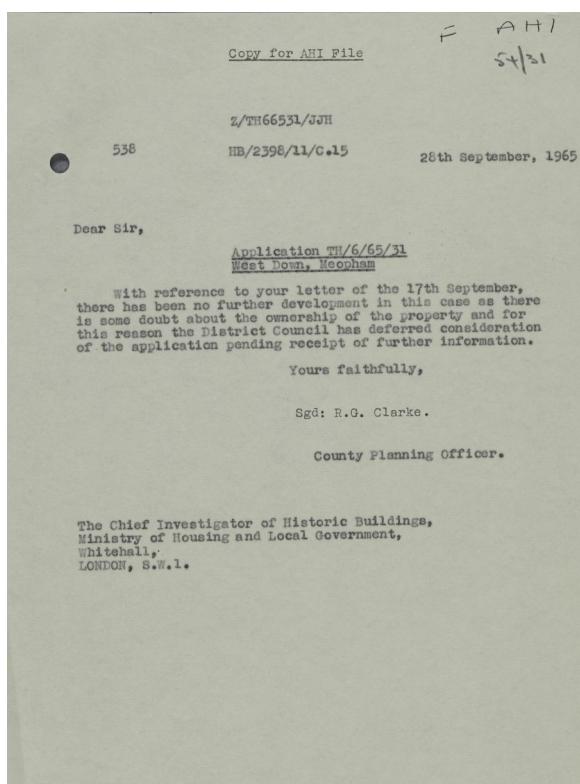


Fig 14:

**1965. 28 September. Kent Archives and Local History. Ref C/PL/2/AHI-54/31.** Letter from County Planning Officer to Ministry of Housing and Local Government confirming planning application TH/6/65/31 has not been determined because '*there is some doubt about the ownership of the property*'.



The Coach House, West Down Farm, Shipley Hills Road, Meopham  
Historic Documentary Evidence  
September 2024  
Not to scale

AHI/54/31. West Down, Shipley Halls. Rot Meopham

Report of meeting at Meopham 11.3.70

Present: Spwood Dep. B.E. Practice?  
Potts arch & Q.S. + IA.

The conversion scheme was discussed before the WPS meeting. After 20 mins survey of the rotting, damp fabric it was evident that they wanted to pull the bldg down & not convert it. The various steps were outlined, for their benefit. LBC for demo. App form for new house. Mr. of Ag. Farms:  
2 photos taken - very gloomy day (F:8 D:1/100)

IA  
11.3.70

NB. The bldg is considerably out of plumb throughout - surrounded by undergrowth - hidden from the road & would need a good spending on it. Unless an applicant came forward seriously prepared to convert it at this sort of figure, we should not be advised to ~~refuse~~ refuse LBC for demo.

Fig 15:

1970. 11 March. Kent Archives and Local History. Ref C/PL/2/AHI-54/31 Officer notes taken during a site visit about possible conversion of the building. The officer describes the building as 'rotting, damp fabric' and 'the building is considerably out of plumb throughout, surrounded by undergrowth, hidden from the road'.



Fig 16:

1970. 11 March. Kent Archives and Local History. Ref C/PL/2/AHI-54/31. Photograph of West Down taken by officer on site visit.



The Coach House, West Down Farm, Shipley Hills Road, Meopham  
Historic Documentary Evidence  
September 2024  
Not to scale

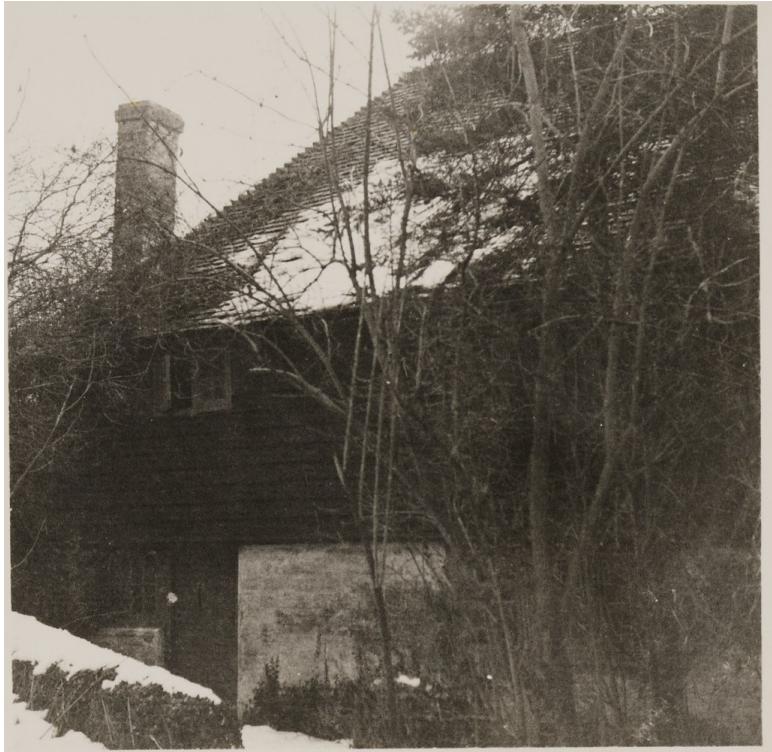


Fig 17:

1970. 11 March. Kent Archives and Local History. Ref C/PL/2/AHI-54/31. Photograph of West Down taken by officer on site visit.

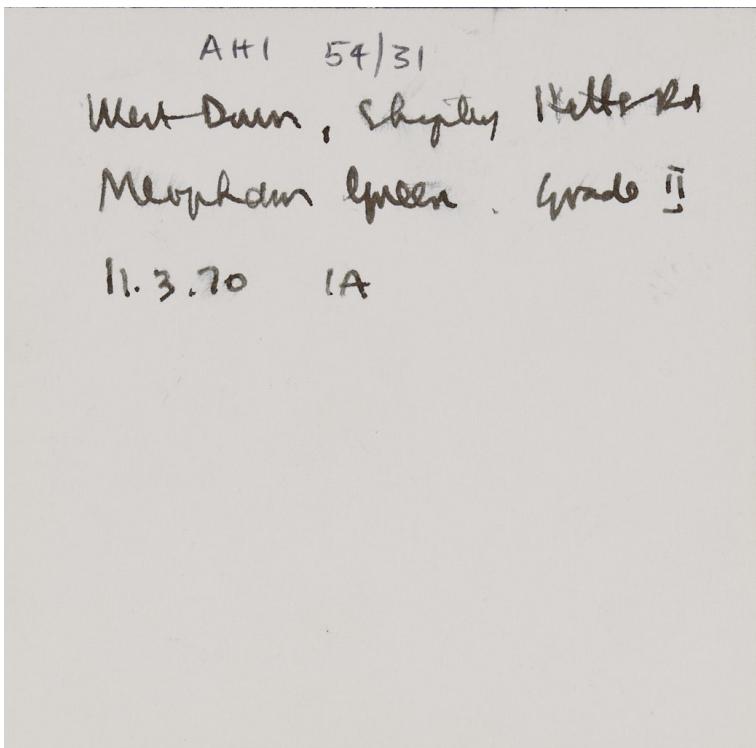


Fig 18:

1970. 11 March. Kent Archives and Local History. Ref C/PL/2/AHI-54/31. Back of photograph of West Down taken by officer on site visit confirming dates pictures were taken.



The Coach House, West Down Farm, Shipley Hills Road, Meopham  
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September 2024  
Not to scale

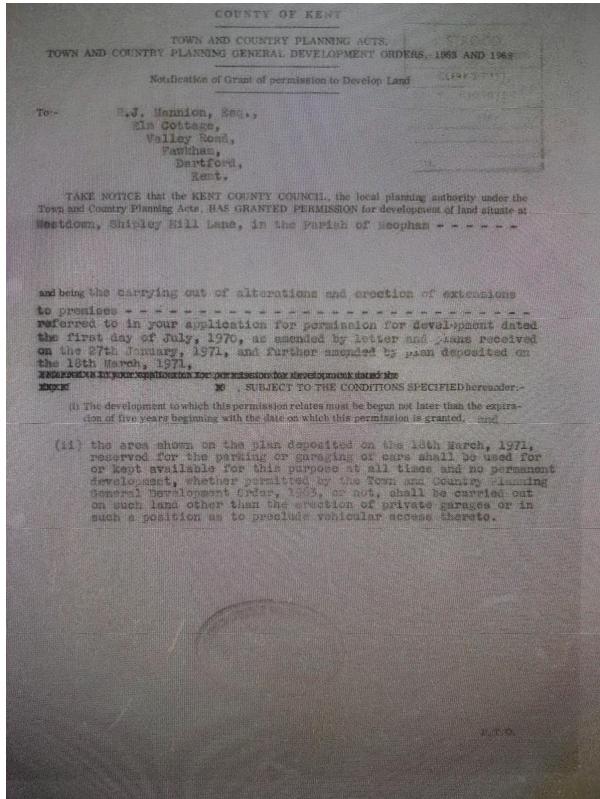


Fig 19:

**1971. 28 May. Kent County Council Decision Notice granting listed building consent/planning permission to R J Minnion for works to carry out alterations and erection of extensions to West Down. A condition was included on the approval to provide for parking and garaging where without such provision it is likely car parking would occur that is inconvenient to other road users and detrimental to amenity.**

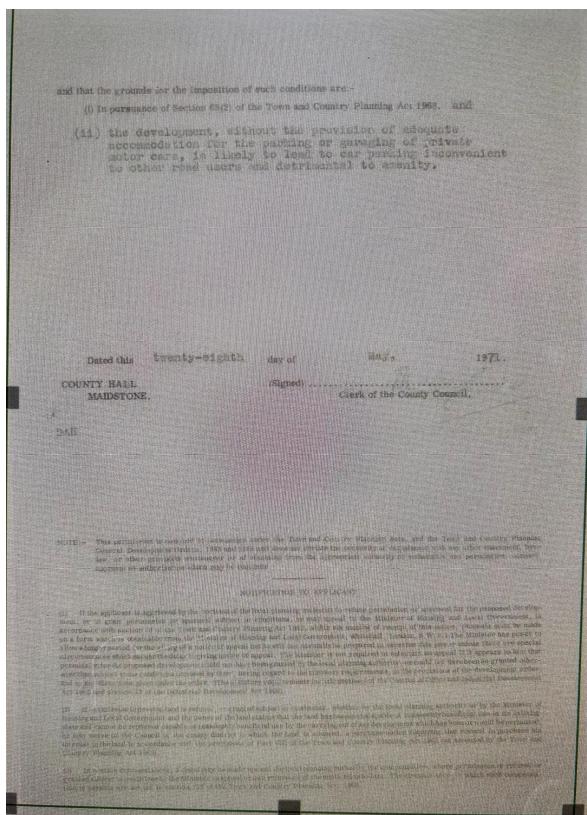


Fig 20:

**1971. 28 May. Kent County Council Decision Notice granting listed building consent/planning permission to R J Minnion for works to carry out alterations and erection of extensions to West Down. A condition was included on the approval to provide for parking and garaging where without such provision it is likely car parking would occur that is inconvenient to other road users and detrimental to amenity.**



**The Coach House, West Down Farm, Shipley Hills Road, Meopham  
Historic Documentary Evidence  
September 2024  
Not to scale**

Please read the accompanying notes before completing any part of this form.  
**APPLICATION FOR PERMISSION TO DEVELOP LAND ETC.**

**Town and Country Planning Act 1971**

Three completed copies of this form and plans  
 must be submitted to The Burying, Urban or Rural District Council to which the site is situated.  
 In the case of developments affecting a Town Clerk, another copy of the form and plans is required.

**Post office use only**

**17 JAN 1972**

**1** Form T.P.1

**GR 75 28**

**17 JAN 1972**

**PART 1—so be completed by or on behalf of all applicants as far as applicable to the particular development.**

<b>1. Applicant (in block capitals)</b>	<b>Agent (if any) to whom correspondence should be sent (in block capitals)</b>
<b>Name</b> <b>H. E. COLOGNE</b>	<b>Name</b>
<b>Address</b> <b>CARAVAN</b>	<b>Address</b>
<b>WEST DOWN FARM, MEOPHAM</b>	<b>Tel. No.</b>
<b>2. Particulars of proposed for which permission is sought</b>	
(a) Full address or location of the land to which this application relates and site area if known <b>WEST DOWN FARM</b> <b>MEOPHAM</b>	
(b) Brief particulars of proposed development including the purpose for which the land and/or buildings are to be used <b>CONVERSION OF STABLES</b> <b>TO BUNGALOW</b>	
(c) State whether applicants owns or controls any adjoining land and if so, give its location (see also Note 3) <b>OWNER</b>	
(d) State whether the proposed involves: (i) New buildings (ii) Alteration or extension (iii) Change of use (iv) Conversion of a <u>1</u> into a <u>2</u> (v) Alteration of an <u>existing</u> building into a <u>highway</u> (vi) Alteration of an <u>existing</u> building into a <u>highway</u>  <b>vehicular</b> <b>pedestrian</b> <b>pedestrian</b> <b>YES</b> <b>NO</b> <b>NO</b> <b>NO</b>	
(e) If residential development, state number of dwelling units proposed and type if known, e.g. house, bungalow, flats  <b>YES</b> <b>NO</b>	
(f) State Yes or No <b>YES</b>  If you, delete any of the following which are not reserved for subsequent approval 1 strong      3 general appearance 2 design      4 shape or size  If yes, state the date and number of notice or conditional permission Number <b>11/6/72/2441</b>  If no, state the date and number of previous permission and identify the particular condition (see note 5) Number The condition  <b>NO</b>	
(g) Apposed or reserved matters following the grant of notice or conditional permission  (h) Reasons of a compulsory permission or permission for resumption of building or construction of a use without compensation, giving the name to which planning permission has been granted  <b>PTD.</b>	

Fig 21:

**1974.** 23 December. Planning application paperwork for application to Gravesham Borough Council to approved conditions in pursuant of appeal TH/6/72/411. Mr Cologne who submitted the application is cited as owner of the building referred to as stables and is living in a caravan at West Down Farm at that time.

1 of 1

4. Particulars of Present and Previous Use of Buildings or Land

Site

(i) Present use of building/land  
(ii) If vacant, the last previous use  
(See Note 1)

(i)  
(ii)

**VACANT  
STABLES**

5. Additional Information

(a) Is the application for industrial, office, storage or storage or  
shopping purpose?  
(See Note 1)

State  
For or Not  
**NO**

If yes, complete Form T.3.

(b) Does the proposed development  
involve the felling of any trees?  
(See Note 1)

State  
Yes or No  
**NO**

If yes, indicate precise position and species on plan.

(c) (i) How will surface waste be disposed off?  
(ii) How will soil storage be dealt with?

(i)  
(ii) **SOAK AWAY  
CEG POWL**

6. Plans

State of drawing and plan submitted with the application. **2**

Note: The proposed plan of enclosure, the materials and colour of the walls and roof, landscaping materials etc., should be clearly shown on the submitted plans  
unless the application is to receive any.

Or/We hereby apply for

OR  planning permission to use building as workshop storage workshop or garage as a use of land already reserved as described on site application and the accompanying plans.

OR  approval of details of enclosure as workshop as the owner operator specified WORK USE described in site application and the accompanying plans.

\*Delete where not applicable.

Draw: **[Signature]** **[Signature]**

Signature

(On behalf of [owner/applicant name if signed by an agent])

Note: An appropriate certificate must accompany the application when you are seeking approval to nominate trustees - see Note 10. The following certificate will be accepted if you are the owner or have a tenancy of the land. Only one can need be completed.

Certificate under Section 27 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1971

Certificate A \*

I hereby certify that **[Signature]** the owner holder in respect of the five acres of every part of the land to which this accompanying application relates,

\*None of the land to which the application relates constitutes or forms part of an agricultural holding; or

\*I have given the requisite notice to any person other than **[Signature]**, who, 20 days before the date of the application, was a tenant of any agricultural holding any part of which was comprised in the land to which the application relates, via —

Name of Tenant

Address

Date of service of  
notice

Signature  
On behalf of

Date

**10/12/74**

\*Delete where inappropriate

Fig 22:

**1974.** 23 December. Planning application paperwork for application to Gravesham Borough Council to approved conditions in pursuant of appeal TH/6/72/411. The building is described as a vacant stables.



**The Coach House, West Down Farm, Shipley Hills Road, Meopham**  
Historic Documentary Evidence  
September 2024  
Not to scale

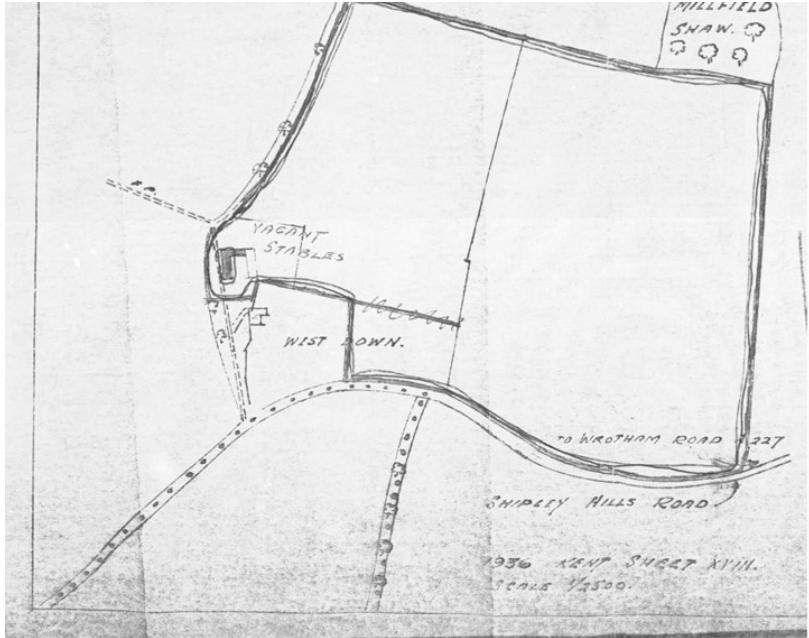


Fig 23:

**1974.** 23 December. Planning application paperwork for application to Gravesham Borough Council to approved conditions in pursuant of appeal TH/6/72/411. The plan shows the site which includes the stables and surrounding land but clearly the Farmhouse is not identified in the same ownership.

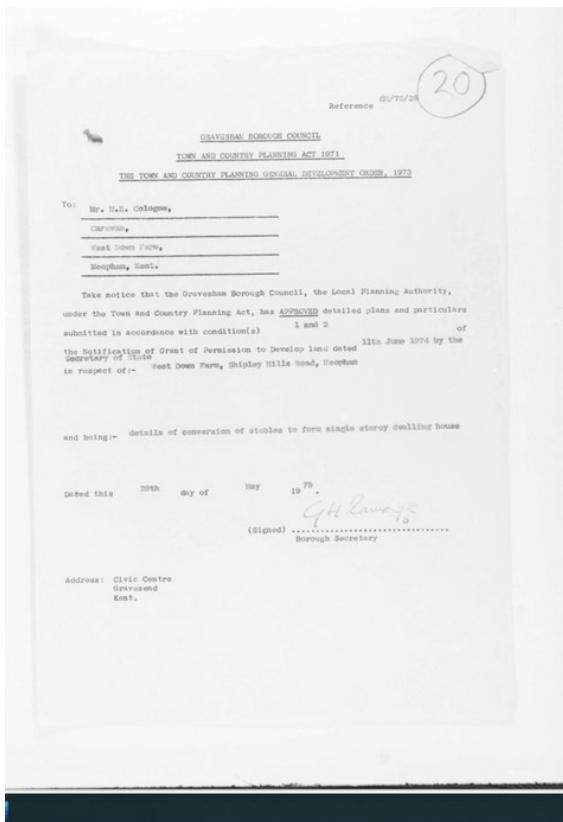


Fig 24:

**1974. 11 June.** Paperwork from Gravesham Borough Council to Mr Cologne at the caravan, West Down Farm approving the proposal under application TH/6/72/411



The Coach House, West Down Farm, Shipley Hills Road, Meopham  
Historic Documentary Evidence  
September 2024  
Not to scale