

“Ringmer to 2030”

Appendix B

Ringmer heritage buildings meeting English Heritage criteria for listing

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1. Errors and omissions in the current English Heritage list

The principles that guide the selection of buildings and other structures for protection by listing are published in *‘Principles of selection for listing buildings’* published by the Department of Culture, Media & Sport in Mar 2010 and available on the DCMS website. The national record of listed buildings is maintained by English Heritage. The general principles used are:

- that all buildings built before 1700 that contain a significant proportion of their original fabric should be listed;
- that most buildings built from 1700 to 1840 should be listed; and
- for buildings built after 1840 progressively greater selection is necessary.

It is now 50 years since the list of listed buildings in Ringmer parish was last subject to systematic review. Neither the original list, nor the way that it was maintained, especially in its early years under Chailey R.D.C., were without defect. The current number of listed buildings in Ringmer is relatively low compared to the numbers in other nearby parishes such as Glynde and Firlde that had only a small fraction of Ringmer's population in the Georgian era.

In the period since the list was created there has been:

- a greatly increased public appreciation of the significance of local history, and in particular social history;
- some change in emphasis in the relative importance of the contributions of polite and vernacular buildings to the English landscape; and
- an increased understanding of the timber framing traditions of vernacular building in Sussex.

Ringmer has an active local history group, the Ringmer History Study Group, founded in 1981 whose research and publications have revealed a great deal of new information about the village. The lack of protection of some of Ringmer's most significant buildings has been a continuing cause of concern. These studies identify a number of buildings in the parish that unambiguously meet all the English Heritage criteria for listing, and whose loss would be a cause for great regret, and a further smaller group making a sufficient contribution to the character of the Ringmer Green conservation area to justify local listing.

Although it appears that at least one Ringmer building other than the parish church was listed as early as 1952, the earliest systematic record in the Ringmer Parish Council listed buildings file is to a draft list published in July 1960 and, apparently, formally adopted in August 1965. This July 1960 draft list appears to have remained in use by Chailey R.D.C. well into the 1970s (still including one house formally de-listed by the Minister in June 1965).

The person responsible for drawing up the July 1960 draft list appears to have had limited local knowledge. The properties are identified by name but several of the names are incorrect or obsolete. A few corrections or amendments were made in the late 1970s, and in one or two cases the descriptions have been amended. Two listed houses and the listed gate piers of one of them were transferred to Ringmer from the former South Malling parish in the 1980s following a boundary re-alignment. One property (Park Gate, Old Uckfield Road) was added to the list in 2008. We are not aware of any systematic review since 1960. Most of the descriptions remain unaltered from 1965.

As a result:

- One property on the current list (Norlington Farmhouse, Norlington Lane, BN8 5SH, ref.10/596) is given the name of a different, distinguished but late-Victorian Ringmer property (South Norlington House, Bishops Lane, BN8 5LD). On our copy of the July 1960 list this house is called simply 'Norlington', with 'South' and 'House' as a handwritten addition. The description and the photograph in the current list are those of Norlington Farmhouse. This mistake is of sufficient antiquity for an August 1965 copy of the list that includes only the small number of buildings then listed grade II, together with their owners and occupiers, to list 'South Norlington House', with the name of the then owner of the Bishops Lane property.
- Three properties that appear on the July 1960 list no longer appear on the current list. One of these, Delves House, was formally de-listed by the Minister in 1965. The other two were omitted about the time that the list was transferred to Lewes D.C., perhaps because they were misnamed in the July 1960 list and then could not be identified at the later date. One is a substantial Elizabethan timber framed house that should by any standards qualify for listing (H1 below). There is no record in the Ringmer Parish Council file of any formal de-listing for either house.

- One July 1960 listing (17/4) that originally covered two adjacent houses is now (11/581) considered to cover only one of the two. The house that escaped from the list (see B19 below) has since been permitted to undergo very significant changes in appearance that have destroyed its special character.

When the draft list was created, half a century ago, much less was known about Sussex timber framing than is known today. However, one would have hoped that the two substantially intact medieval hall houses in Ringmer would have been identified as such. Such houses should qualify for the grade of II* rather than their present II. There are two other listed properties that have been shown by internal inspection to contain significant medieval content (10/574 & 10/607), but this would be harder to spot from external inspection. There is one other substantial Elizabethan timber framed house that has quite exceptional qualities that passed unrecognised in July 1960 (Clayhill House, ref.10/601). This also is a strong candidate for grade II* listing rather than grade II.

The July 1960 list also failed to identify the three Ringmer properties known to be faced with mathematical tiles. In two cases these were mis-described as brick. For Cheyney House (10/580, listed as Central Stores) this was corrected when a 1973 application to demolish the property was refused because a member of the public drew this, and the fact that the house was listed, to the attention of Chailey R.D.C. planning officers. The second house, Park Gate, Uckfield Road, BN8 5RW, was originally omitted from the list, but added in 2008. The third house, Middleham (10/570) is still described as faced with white brick c.1800, when these are in fact white mathematical tiles. This wing, built for the Rev John Constable when he became Vicar of Ringmer, is clearly dated 1813.

Upper Lodge (11/588) continues on the list despite having burned down in June 2002 and having been completely demolished and replaced by a newly-built house.

2. Historical information

There is very little historical information associated with any of the present listings, with the exception of the 2008 listing for Park Gate. Sadly what little there is mostly incorrect. Thus Broyle Place (11/588) is described as once owned by Sir William Springett (1620-1644), father of the wife of William Penn. This is incorrect. The title deeds and many other sources show that Broyle Place was purchased and rebuilt by Sir William's grandfather, Herbert Springett of Lewes, in 1615; that it was then inherited in 1620 by Herbert Springett's son Sir Thomas Springett (d.1639, Sir William's uncle) and then by his son Sir Herbert Springett (d.1662, Sir William's cousin). The future Sir William Springett was indeed born at Broyle Place, but left as a child when his widowed mother returned to her own family in Kent. Sir William died of a fever while leading his Kent regiment at the Siege of Arundel and was buried at Ringmer (where his father had been buried) for convenience.

The fact that Upper Clayhill (10/603) was the home of the late Prime Minister Lord (James) Callaghan for the final 30 years of his life, including the years when he held this office, should also rate a mention.

3. Georgian cottages

Elizabethan, Stuart & Georgian polite residences and farmhouses are still quite common features of the towns and countryside of Sussex. Most are protected by listing. Far less common today are the cottage homes of the same eras. Fifty years ago, when the original listing was carried out, these were more frequently met with, but over the intervening decades a very high proportion have been completely rebuilt or modernised and extended out of all recognition. It is now essential that the few Georgian (or earlier) cottages that remain externally essentially intact should be protected. There are a small number of such survivors in Ringmer.

4. Twenty heritage Ringmer buildings that qualify for protection under policy 5.7

Outline information is provided for each below. The Ringmer History Study Group holds detailed files on the history of every historic Ringmer house. Any information considered relevant can be made available.

H1. Wellingham Vane, Wellingham Lane, BN8 5SN



This substantial timber framed house in the heart of the Wellingham settlement appeared in the July 1960 list (16/32) and in lists provided by Chailey R.D.C. in the 1970s. 'Wellingham Brewery' was a grade II listed building, described as an L-shaped building, probably 17th century or earlier, but is not included in lists provided more recently. The timber framing indicates a house with a complex history, and at least 3 different phases of construction between the late 16th and early 17th centuries. There was an associated malthouse to the north of the house between the 17th century and the late 19th century, and a brewery stood across the road from the mid-19th century until World War I. Houses of this nature are almost invariably listed, and it is unclear how or why Wellingham Vane escaped from the list.

H2. The Barn, Upper Wellingham Farm, BN8 5SN



This 3-bay aisled timber framed agricultural building to the north of Upper Wellingham Farmhouse was converted to residential use in 2000. It has clasped purlins and in three walls the large, flat, curved timber braces characteristic of local 16th century timber framing. It does not have the traditional barn design, with its entrance always in the end wall. Although close to the medieval Upper Wellingham Farmhouse, a 1767 map shows it was originally part of a separate Wellingham house plot, added to Upper Wellingham Farm only in the mid-17th century. It appears to be at least a century older than any other surviving timber-framed agricultural building in Ringmer. Its conversion to a residence was conservative.

H3. The Georgian farmhouse, barn & granary at Plashett Park Farm, BN8 5SJ



This farmstead was established by the Firle Estate in the former Plashett Park deer park by the very early 19th century. The farm is shown on the first (1813 survey) O.S. map for this area and the farmstead is shown in more detail on an 1822 Firle Estate map. An 1823 advertisement of the lease mentions both this small farmhouse or 'double cottage' and the timber framed and weatherboarded barn. The present Plashett Park farmhouse (not proposed for protection) was added in the 1840s, and the original Georgian farmhouse has since been used to provide accommodation for the farm workforce. Although Plashett Park Farm remains very much a working farm, the modern functional buildings are away to the south west of the original farmstead, which remains a timeless reminder of farming days now long passed. Inclusion in this list is not intended to preclude the sympathetic and conservative conversion of the barn or granary to residential or employment use.

H4. Swingate, Hook Lane, BN8 5SG



This large, isolated, multi-stage house, for many years a huddle of cottages, originated between 1718 and 1732 when the 3½-bay timber-framed central section was built, probably in two stages, by Thomas Hollands, a Ringmer carpenter who became an Uckfield timber-broker involved in the contemporary clearance of the adjacent Firle Estate Plashett Park to improve the grazing. This house was then the home to the Plashett Park keeper for some years. The brick-built cottages to the north of this central timber framed section were added by brickmaker Thomas Crowhurst between 1767 and 1776. The house, with further early 19th century additions to the south, became a cluster of labourers' cottages until formed into a single house in the mid-20th century.

H5. Two timber framed barns, Norlington Farm, Norlington Lane, BN8 5SH



Norlington Farmhouse is listed (10/596), as are its two immediate neighbours in the heart of the Norlington settlement, the medieval Holly Tree Cottage (10/597) and the Elizabethan Lilac Cottage (10/598). Historically belonging to Norlington Farm and also prominent features in this medieval settlement are two substantial timber framed and weatherboarded barns. One (left, above) stands adjacent to Norlington Farmhouse, and the other (right, above) is directly across the lane. Both date back to the late Georgian period. The barn that stands across the lane has some unusual timber framing features, including arched tie beams to maximise storage space, and may well be earlier - its original house, adjoining, was lost in the early 18th century when Norlington Farm was merged with a neighbour. Inclusion in this list is not intended to preclude the sympathetic and conservative conversion of the barns to residential or employment use.

H6. Lea Cottage & Sarnic, Broyle Lane, BN8 5PH



This pair of vernacular brick and tile cottages are set far back from the west side of Broyle Lane, at the rear of their plot. They are located in this unusual position because they were amongst the row of Broyleside houses and cottages that lined the boundary of the large Broyle Common prior to its enclosure by 1767 Act of Parliament, with the long front gardens added only at the enclosure. The pair of cottages are shown on c.1766 and 1771 pre- and post-enclosure maps of the Broyle, and contain inglenook fireplaces, as expected from this period. Many period features survive inside the cottages. At the date of the enclosure the cottages were owned by John Elphick, farmer/brickmaker at the nearby (listed) Fingerpost Farm, similarly situated with respect to the former Broyle boundary pale, and the pre-enclosure map shows Elphick's brick-kilns just inside the Broyle boundary on the plot allocated to him by the enclosure commissioners that is now the front gardens of these and the adjacent cottages. The cottages were doubtless built of bricks made and burned on the site on which they stand.

H7. Little Thatch, Lewes Road, BN8 5NA



This small single-storey thatched cottage with visible but unsubstantial timber framing stands by the roadside a little to the east of the Green Man Inn. The only thatched cottage in Ringmer, and used as a tea rooms in the 1930s, it could easily be overlooked as a pastiche. It is, however, a genuine vernacular cottage built for poor labourers early in the 19th century, and originally accommodating two households. Re-thatching carried out in 2002, when several layers of increasingly more decayed thatch were removed, established that it had always been thatched. Thatched houses, barns and farm buildings were

commonplace in Georgian Ringmer, but this is the sole survivor in the parish. The site, originally roadside verge to the east of the Green Man, was informally enclosed by William Taylor, innkeeper there from 1802 until his death in 1833. He constructed here some 'huts', initially used to house followers of the soldiers at the nearby Ringmer Barracks, but even before the barracks closed in 1827 he was regularly submitting bills to the Ringmer parish overseers for the rents of poor village families living there. His tenants were amongst the poorest and most unruly labourers in the parish, including several transported for petty crime, but also some members of his own family. These included his stepson John Dicker, a thatcher, resident here as early as 1823. Ownership of the plot was formally granted to John Dicker in 1840 but the cottage was evidently in existence earlier. In 1839 John Dicker appeared on the electoral register, qualified by what he claimed was a freehold house and garden near the Green Man. A cottage on this exact site is shown on an 1835 map of the adjoining farm, and the first edition (1813) O.S. map shows two small buildings here. Little Thatch continued to be owned and occupied by John Dicker's direct descendants until 1927.

H8. Green Lane Farmhouse, Green Lane, BN8 5AD



Despite its description as a farmhouse, this small single-storey cottage of light timber framing, its walls externally tile hung and weatherboarded, was constructed before 1822 to house a superintending labourer on land allocated to the Firle Estate under the 1767 Broyle Enclosure Act. Its occupation was occasionally sub-divided. It has remained part of the Plashett Estate under the successive ownership of the Firle, Glyndebourne and Askew Estates. Plashett woodsman Benjamin Brinkhurst came to live here in the 1860s and his descendants, graduating to small dairy farmers in the late 19th century, remained tenants here until the 21st century. The house was conservatively modernised in 2003.

H9. Red Barn Farmhouse & barn, Harveys Lane, BN8 5AE



Despite its description as a farmhouse, this is a small unmodernised single-storey timber framed and weatherboarded cottage constructed c.1830 to house a superintending labourer (above left), close to a brick and weatherboarded barn built before 1813 (above right). The cottage, barn and associated farmland, all part of the Broyle Park until its enclosure by 1767 Act of Parliament, have remained part of the Plashett Estate under the successive ownership of the Firle, Glyndebourne and Askew Estates. Although currently inhabited, the cottage does not really meet 21st century living standards, and might be considered at risk. Inclusion in this list is not intended to preclude the sympathetic and conservative conversion of the barn to residential or employment use.

H10. Back Green Cottage, Church Hill, BN8 5JX



Back Green Cottage (above left) is a small two-storey cottage, partly plastered and partly tile-hung, located across Church Hill from Ringmer churchyard. It is the only survivor of a row of five cottages and a larger house (variously used as a beerhouse, lodging house and laundry; above right) built by carpenter James Packham on land enclosed from Ringmer Green in 1820. The house and all five cottages were built before 1831, when James Packham's property was advertised for sale. Usually occupied by labourers or village artisans, Back Green Cottage was Ringmer's first Police Station between 1853 and 1863.

H11. The Magazine & Hospital, former Ringmer Royal Horse Artillery Barracks, now Southdown Hunt Kennels, Laughton Road, Ringmer, BN8 5NH



Officers' Quarters (listed)



Barracks magazine (now hunt kennels)



Barracks hospital

The Ringmer Barracks was established by the Ordnance Board c.1798 and remained in that role until 1827, usually housing a troop of the Royal Horse Artillery (whose uniform buttons can still be found all over Ringmer). The site was then used as a lunatic asylum for 25 years before in the 1850s becoming the base for the Southdown Hunt. The timber framed and weatherboarded Officers' Quarters, later used to house the asylum patients and now hunt employees, appear on the current list (11/590). However, two other buildings from the same era survive. One of these is the brick-built Magazine, which has been used throughout the Hunt's occupation of the site as the hounds' kennels. The Magazine, externally unexceptional, is internally a remarkable structure, arched and corbelled to prevent and contain any explosion. It was too substantial to demolish in 1827. Is any other similar example known to survive from this period? It is mentioned in an 1827 barracks survey, and specified as the kennels in a later 1877 War Office survey. The 1877 survey also identifies the surviving brick building to the rear of the site as the former barracks Hospital, whose medical services were provided by the geologist and iguanodon discoverer Dr Gideon Mantell, F.R.S., of Lewes.

H12. Moon Cottage, Moor Lane, BN8 5UR



Moon Cottage, a small double-fronted brick farmhouse built in the first half of the 18th century, stands set back from the west side of Moor Lane. It has belonged to the Glyndebourne Estate for over 250 years. With an approximately central doorway and chimneys on the end walls, it genuflects to more polite 18th century

design, while retaining as a matter of practicality a kitchen rather larger than the parlour. It originally belonged to one of the many small farms in the Ashton settlement where the medieval Open Field system was enclosed by consolidating purchases made by William Hay of Glyndebourne after his inheritance in 1716, enabling him to proclaim himself a decade before his 1755 death "*at last the Master of Ashton Laines*". The Estate farmland was reorganised into large tenanted farms, leaving the Estate a supply of redundant farmhouses in Ashton, so it undertook no new house building here for more than a century after William Hay's death. In the 17th and early 18th centuries Ashton was a brickmaking centre, so Moon Cottage is very likely to have been built of locally-produced bricks.

H13. Bow Bells milestones nos. 47 & 49 on the Uckfield Road, (A26)



Four cast iron 'Bow Bells' milestones, numbers 47-50, survived on the A26 in Ringmer parish until recently, marking the distance from London. All were on the west side of the former London-Lewes turnpike. No.47 stands immediately north of the junction with Isfield Lane and no.49 near the entrance to Ringmer Park. No.50 stood a little to the north of Earwig Corner until stolen a few years ago and No.48, which stood a little north of the Clay Hill Garage, has disappeared very recently.

H14. Barn & Granary, Clayhill House, BN8 5RU



Clayhill House is listed grade II (reference no.10/601). In the farmyard adjoining the house are a range of farm buildings including a large timber framed and weatherboarded double-entry barn that is at least the equal in age and quality of the listed barns at Upper Clayhill Farm (10/603A) and Broyle Gate Farm (11/582A) and a brick and timber framed cart shed/granary that has the distinction of having been used as a Methodist Sunday School for some years in the early 20th century. Inclusion in this list is not intended to preclude the sympathetic and conservative conversion of the barn and granary to residential or employment use.

H15. Corsica Cottage, Old Uckfield Road, BN8 5RX



In 1793 this site was granted from the roadside waste to limeburner Robert Smith, who lived at the adjoining house (White Cottage) and operated the Bridgewick chalkpits. By 1795 a house had been built here and was occupied by his crippled brother Thomas Smith, also a limeburner. The house consists of two parallel ranges, both largely of flint construction with brick used only for the quoins and corners and both with very similar roof construction, apparently a single build. As the Smith brothers would have had ready access to flints, not widely used for domestic building in Ringmer, the present house seems likely to be that they built in 1795. For much of the 20th century the house formed part of the East Sussex County Council smallholding estate in Ringmer.

H16. Wellingham Barn, Wellingham Lane, BN8 5SW



Wellingham Barn is a late-Georgian timber-framed barn within the curtilage of the listed Wellingham Folly (10/606) and close to Wellingham House (10/605). The barn has been adapted to private leisure use. Inclusion in this list is not intended to preclude its further sympathetic and conservative conversion to residential or employment use.

H17. The Mill House, Rushey Green, BN8 5JB



A cottage was present by the end of the 17th century on this plot taken in from Rushey Green, but this square, double-fronted, painted brick house with a hipped tile roof (above right) appears primarily of Georgian date. This property was purchased in 1814 by bricklayer Joseph Edwards, who extended the plot (at the expense of Rushey Green) and developed it with several other houses, none of which survive, over

the following 20 years. This house probably pre-dates his acquisition as it is quite different in style from the new houses that he built here, all semi-detached cottages. The house was later purchased by the Glyndebourne Estate and occupied by the last miller of the Estate's Mill Plain windmill (11/594). A steam mill built by the Estate immediately to the south of this house continued operations into the 1960s, still run by the family of the last wind miller, but is now converted to residential use. The steam mill premises (shown above left) also included a retail shop for many years.

H18. Nos.1-4 North Road, Ringmer Green, BN8 5JS



From North Road and Ringmer Green Nos.1-4 North Road (above left) appear as a decorative row of brick and bargeboarded Victorian cottages attached to the listed house called The Small House (10/567) in the Ringmer Conservation Area. However, examination of the junction between these cottages and the adjacent, listed, Small House (above right) or the view from the Cheyney Field to the rear (which houses the Ringmer Bowls, Croquet and Cricket Club grounds and the Ringmer Scout Hut) shows that the rear section of The Small House and the main sections of Nos.1-3 North Road were originally a single substantial late-17th century timber framed house built by bricklayer John Sumner. Internal examination shows that the substantial timber framing and the main chimney stack of this 17th century house survive behind the added cottage fronts.

H19. Springett Cottages, Ringmer Green, BN8 5PT



Springett Cottages were built in 1891 as a terrace of five weatherboarded model cottages on Ringmer Green on the instructions of the wealthy Quaker spinster philanthropist Sarah Horn Rickman of Wellingham House (listed 10/605) who had also financed the building of the Well House and Pump on Ringmer Green

(listed 10/569). The case for listing this late-Victorian terrace rests on their importance as a distinctive local landmark, right by the church and on the Green, and instantly recognisable by anyone who knows Ringmer. It was constructed by local builder William F. Martin (1849-1902) who is responsible for many of Ringmer's finest Victorian buildings.

H20. South Norlington House, Bishops Lane, BN8 5LD



South Norlington House is a substantial late-Victorian house on Bishops Lane, and an important local landmark just opposite the bottom of Ringmer Green. It stands in a prominent position and is just outside the Conservation Area. The case for listing this house rests on it being the finest and best-located large detached house built by the prolific village builder William F. Martin (1849-1902), who was responsible for building many of the most distinctive structures around Ringmer, and especially around Ringmer Green. His other works include Ringmer church tower and the sadly-lost Ringmer School. South Norlington House was built for his daughter. William F. Martin's large Victorian houses on large plots have proved vulnerable to destructive re-development or sub-division. The importance of South Norlington House in the local landscape is illustrated by it being mistakenly included as grade II listed in the August 1965 list, where it was misidentified for Norlington Farmhouse (no.10/596, still mistakenly called South Norlington House in the current list).

Evidence base:

'Principles of selection for listing buildings': The criteria, published by the Department of Culture, Media & Sport, for listing heritage buildings under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act (1990), published in March 2010. Available at:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/137695/Principles_Selection_Listing_1 .pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/137695/Principles_Selection_Listing_1.pdf)

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