storah architecture

17 November 2026

Building Condition and Repairs

Smallshaw Farm

preliminary schedule of works

1 Purpose and inspection

The former cottages and dairy building retain stone walls, historic openings and materials that give them their character and provide a basis for restoration. Roof failure and exposure have caused deterioration, with significant repair needed to parts of the south elevation and replacement of decayed floor and roof timbers. Our proposals address these defects whilst retaining and repairing surviving fabric wherever practicable.

We visited the property on several occasions during summer 2026. We did not enter the building, as its condition, together with rain and high winds during the visits, made internal access unsafe. Observations of the interior were made from outside through open doors and windows. No close inspection of concealed timbers, wall cores or foundations was possible.

This report records our visual observations and the proposed repairs. It is to be read with drawing 304, Extent of Rebuilding, dated 23 October 2026, which identifies the areas of masonry consolidation, reinstatement and roof work. The drawing gives a clearer account of the intended retention and repair. Restricted access means that concealed construction, final repair limits and structural support arrangements remain subject to safe close inspection and structural assessment, particularly at the western gable.

2 Conservation approach to the works

The conservation approach begins with the fabric that survives. Repair will take precedence over replacement, with intervention limited to what is necessary for lasting repairs and the proposed use. Sound masonry and suitable roof timbers will remain, with stone, slates and flags salvaged for reuse. Weathered surfaces and irregularities that contribute to the character of the building will be respected. Reinstatement will follow evidence in the building and the historical material already available, avoiding conjectural features. This approach reflects Historic England's Principles of Repair for Historic Buildings.

Replacement materials will match the scale, colour and texture of the existing materials. Repairs will also be physically compatible with the retained construction. Historic masonry repairs will use compatible lime mortar, without Portland cement or cement gauging. The works will address weather protection and the causes of decay, alongside assessment and repair of structural restraint. Safe access and temporary

support will precede intrusive inspection or repair. Props will remain until suitable alternative support is in place. The following schedule explains the works indicated on drawing 304.

3 Preliminary schedule of roof and wall repairs

R01 Surviving roof structure

The yellow shading on drawing 304 identifies roof repair and reinstatement. The available views indicate that some existing roof timbers may be retained. Suitable timbers will remain, with new rafters and slate laths introduced where required. Close inspection will establish the individual members suitable for reuse and the connections needed to form the repaired roof. The shading identifies the roof work as a whole and does not imply replacement of every structural timber.

R02 Collapsed roof areas

The collapsed roof areas will be reinstated with new ridge beams, rafters and slate laths, following the established roof form. This will restore weather protection to the building. The replacement structure, including the smaller roof, will be designed together with its supports and connections to the retained masonry.

R03 Roof slates

Existing slates will be carefully salvaged and assessed for reuse. Sound slates will be reinstated, with matching replacements where coverings are missing or unsuitable. The quantity available for reuse will be established during careful removal and sorting.

W01 Masonry consolidation and reinstatement

Drawing 304 distinguishes blue areas of masonry to be consolidated from red areas of reinstatement and replacement stonework. On the south elevation, the principal intervention is around the openings at the western end, with smaller areas around other openings. Areas of significant collapse will be rebuilt using suitable salvaged stone and compatible lime mortar. Sound adjoining masonry will remain. Consolidation will retain the existing wall and include local stone repairs and repointing. The blue markings also identify repairs at wall heads and gable verges. Close inspection will establish the final repair limits and the support needed during the work.

W04 Western gable

The western gable shows bowing and is identified in blue on drawing 304 for consolidation. Our preliminary view is that deterioration of the floors and failure of the smaller roof may have reduced restraint and contributed to the movement. The proposal is to retain and strengthen the wall where structurally practicable, together with the restraint provided by the repaired roof and replacement floor. Assessment of the wall, its connections and the extent of movement will establish the appropriate method and whether any local rebuilding is needed. The cause of the bowing has not yet been confirmed.

4 Openings internal walls and floors

W02 Window and door openings

The window and door openings have been altered over time and include props and steel lintels. The red markings on drawing 304 include stonework at openings on the north and south elevations. The proposals provide for appropriate stone heads, jambs and mullions, informed by surviving details and available historical evidence. Sound surrounds will remain, and later alterations will be considered for their contribution to the building before removal. Props and lintels will be removed only when suitable alternative support is in place.

W03 Internal masonry walls

The internal masonry walls appeared generally serviceable from the views available through the openings. They are proposed to remain largely untouched, apart from local repairs and the alterations shown on the application drawings. Linings will provide straight internal finishes with limited disturbance to the masonry. Close inspection will confirm their condition and suitability for the proposed loads. The linings are finishes and will not be relied upon for structural support.

F01 Ground floor

The ground floor flags will be carefully lifted and salvaged where possible. The proposed excavation will allow an insulated floor with underfloor heating to be introduced, improving comfort and addressing ground moisture through a construction compatible with the traditional walls. Excavation levels will be established in relation to the existing foundations. Suitable flags will be retained for reuse, with their location determined as the floor design is developed.

F02 First floor

Prolonged exposure has caused extensive decay to the visible first floor joists and boarding, and replacement is proposed. Any sound timbers identified during close inspection will be retained where practicable. The first floor plan on drawing 304 identifies the timber floor assessment. Replacement floors and connections will provide the necessary support and restraint to the retained walls. Close inspection of the supporting masonry and concealed bearing positions will inform that design.

5 Restoration and extent of works

Drawing 304 locates the proposed works within the surviving building. Blue areas are to be retained and consolidated, red areas identify masonry reinstatement and replacement stonework, and yellow identifies roof repair and reinstatement. Uncoloured masonry is proposed to remain, with local repairs and repointing where required. The extent shown supports an approach centred on retention, with rebuilding directed to identified areas. Replacement of decayed roof and floor timbers is considered separately from masonry reconstruction. Final repair limits and structural support arrangements remain subject to safe close inspection and structural assessment.

In our view, the surviving stonework, historic openings and opportunities to reuse materials provide a credible basis for pursuing restoration. Its conservation benefit lies in retaining this fabric and the building's place in the farmstead. Reinstating weather protection and bringing the former cottages and dairy building into residential use will provide a purpose for their continued care. Necessary replacement of failed elements forms part of that repair approach, with sound fabric retained wherever practicable. The visible defects do not, on their own, establish that the building is beyond salvage. Structural assessment, particularly of the western gable, will establish the repair methods and extent of rebuilding needed. Within those limits, restoration offers a positive means of sustaining the building's local heritage value.