CABINET

Report subject	**Disposal of farmhouse and farm buildings at Hicks Farm, Bournemouth.**
Meeting date	2 September 2026
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	This report seeks approval for disposal of the majority of the Council-owned property and land forming the Hicks Farm buildings complex, Bournemouth. Securing a future use for these assets has been under review as the various outbuildings are in a significant state of disrepair and have been for many years. There is a current disrepair claim against the Council on the tenanted farmhouse, and the Council is unable to fund the necessary repairs required to bring the site back into use. The proposed transactions shall secure best consideration in accordance with Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972. The disposals are expected to secure capital receipt of c. £1m that can support an improved facility in the western parcel as well as Councils finances.
Recommendations	**It is RECOMMENDED that:** Cabinet approve the disposal of the land and buildings at Hicks Farm as per the attached plans
Reason for recommendations	The disposals resolve the long-standing issues with the farm buildings being in poor condition and with unknown future usage. This releases the buildings and land for external investment that will benefit the overall quality of the local environment of Throop which is a noted concern of the local community. The sale of the farmhouse mitigates the impact of high costs of repair and remedial works. Independent valuation advice confirms that the proposed disposals represent best consideration. Future business case to seek capital investment in the remaining parcel of land to enable continued use by the countryside team as an important location adjacent to countryside sites. Red book valuation of May 2026 estimates the market value of between £820,000 and £1.2m.
Portfolio Holder(s):	Cllr Andy Hadley (Climate Response, Environment and Energy)

Corporate Director	Glynn Barton – Chief Operations Officer
Report Authors	Martin Whitchurch, Strategic Lead for Green Space
Wards	Muscliffe and Strouden Park
Classification	For Information

Background

1. Hicks Farmhouse is listed Grade II and a number of the outbuildings fall within the curtilage of the listing. Hick's farmhouse dates to around 1800 and was Grade II Listed in 1976. The statutory listing covers the farm and any buildings within its curtilage which pre-date 1948. As a result, the brick buildings on the site, which date from the Victorian period, would be covered by the listing. Hicks farm is also located in the Throop and Muccleshell Conservation Area which was designated in 1975.
2. The site has an agricultural land use and is in designated Green Belt. The site was in agricultural use until 2014 when it was returned to the Council. Various schemes for the site have been proposed since, with the farmland now being a SANG and the buildings considered surplus.
3. As the site is covered by the listing and in a Conservation Area there are greater planning restrictions on what can and can't be done. For example, there is a presumption against the demolition/removal of any of the historic buildings.
4. The farmhouse is leased to Seascape Homes and Property Ltd (SHP) a wholly owned council company. SHP sub-let it to a residential tenant. The residential tenant has made a claim for disrepair. Repair remains BCP's responsibility. The disrepair issue will require significant investment (estimated in excess of £60k) to resolve fully for continued residential use
5. The outbuildings have been fenced off for safety, boarded or propped over the last 10 years and are all now classed as dangerous and not fit for use or access. Most of the buildings have not been used for an active agricultural business in this time.
6. Local residents and the Throop and Holdenhurst Parish Council have requested action to improve the former farm holding over the last few years. Previous local engagement suggested residents would support some housing on the site and want to see any form of improvements rather than the current derelict condition.
7. The Corporate Estates team have provided an indicative valuation report (not a full red book valuation) that suggests there will be a market for asset disposal, despite the planning complexities. These include:
   I. The site is in the Throop conservation area
   II. See Appendix 2 for details of the heritage listing and curtilage.
   III. Land to the rear of the site is in Flood zone 3, the site itself is in zone 2 for river flooding.
   IV. The farm is within designated Green Belt.
8. Valuation key points:

I. Scope for residential redevelopment (barn conversion and new build) but the risk is relatively high due to Listed building status and local planning policies.

II. An Overage Clause (within any sale contract) would ensure BCP capture any future uplift in value generated by the grant of planning permission.

III. The property naturally lots itself into three parcels, dwelling/house, larger yard and buildings (1 acre) and a smaller courtyard with barns. Splitting the site could generate a higher overall value than if the site were sold as a single entity.

9. The valuation SWOT analysis highlights are:

I. Strengths: Good connectivity. Semi-rural setting enhances amenity value and long-term desirability. Coherent farmstead layout with multiple outbuildings offering flexibility

II. Weaknesses. Farmhouse requires refurbishment to meet modern standards. Outbuildings in poor condition, with some requiring significant repair or replacement. Listed status restricts alterations and increases compliance costs. The farmhouse's EPC rating is E and we note the certificate has expired.

III. Opportunities. Potential to refurbish the farmhouse to enhance value and marketability. Scope for selective repurposing of outbuildings for ancillary, agricultural, or low intensity alternative uses (subject to planning permission). Small scale residential development; subject to planning permission.

IV. Threats. Potential volatility for interest rate rises due to global economic circumstances, which may have a material impact on rents and capital values. Planning and heritage constraints may limit viable redevelopment options. Risk of further deterioration if repairs are deferred, impacting long-term value.

Future use of retained area

10. Historic use by the Countryside team has been for the storage of materials related to livestock grazing and countryside management, including space for animals if required, albeit rarely used. A barn fire in early 2024 destroyed one of the barns and subsequent health and safety issues has rendered the remaining barns inaccessible.

11. The retention of a parcel to the west of the site ensures continued access to the SANG from the site, along with storage space for materials and equipment, as before.

12. The site is important for the team's wider management of nature reserves and associated ground maintenance and conservation land management. A single replacement barn is recommended towards the rear of the site.

Options Appraisal

13. Option 1: Retain the land and undertake remedial works to meet the disrepair claim, followed by additional works to ensure the property is in good order, compliant and can be re-let in an improved condition. This option does not provide any future funding for extensive and costly remedial works to the farmhouse or any of the

outbuildings. There is no identified future use of the majority of site by the Council which would need ongoing investment and management.

14. Option 2: Agree disposal (Recommended). Secures disposal, an income for the site, mitigates the issues with the buildings that are beyond current Council finances and seeks to secure future improvement funding for the remaining land parcel.

Summary of financial implications

15. With Vacant Possession the market value of the central Farmhouse and eastern parcel has been externally assessed at £820,000. (Appendix 2). This valuation is related to the central and eastern parcels only, subsequent to the valuation wider consideration has been given to the whole site and the area for disposal widened to include all buildings.
16. An early indicative valuation suggested a value of £1.2m for the whole site, it can therefore be taken that c. £1m for the area for disposal is a reasonable market value
17. The outstanding insurance claim for the barn that was subject to a fire in early 2024 is being resolved with a cash settlement enabling funds to be redirected for a new barn in a different location, to be confirmed.
18. The proposed disposals represent best consideration reasonably obtainable in accordance with Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972.

Summary of legal implications

19. The proposed disposals are required to comply with Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 and will be supported by independent valuation advice to evidence best consideration. Legal advice will be obtained to ensure that appropriate protections, conditions, and safeguards are secured within the transaction documentation.
20. The Council has received a disrepair claim for the farmhouse from the tenant. This matter is being assessed by respective legal teams, alongside the notice for termination of the lease being made.

Summary of human resources implications

21. No specific implications identified.

Summary of sustainability impact

22. The farm buildings and associated land have been dormant for ~10 years pending a decision on future management and options by the Council. The disposal of these assets is intended to secure a future use of the site which is beyond the means of the council to deliver. The future sustainability of the various buildings, appearance of the site within the context of the village, its agricultural heritage and future sustainability are all therefore dependent on the private sector to bring forward a viable scheme that can meet the site constraints and a sustainable future.
23. The Asset Management Plan recognises the estate should be sustainable and carbon neutral and will play a key role in the council achieving these targets.

Summary of public health implications

24. No specific impact or implication on public health as the site is not open to the public, nor providing a public facility.

Summary of equality implications

25. There are no direct public health implications associated with this decision.

Summary of risk assessment

26. Retaining the farm buildings creates risk from the existing building condition issues and no identified means of making the necessary improvements to them. There are significant health and safety issues with the current barns and outbuildings through risk of potential collapse has led to them being closed off to any form of access and use. Mitigated through disposal.
27. The Farmhouse is let to Seascape Homes & Property Ltd who in turn sublet to a tenant. On termination of the lease to Seascape H&P they have grounds to end the tenancy with their tenant after 4 months' notice.
28. There is risk to the future operation of the countryside team with reduced access and storage related to the management of the surrounding nature reserves and SANG. Securing a new storage barn, improved access and site security is important for the future operation of the site.

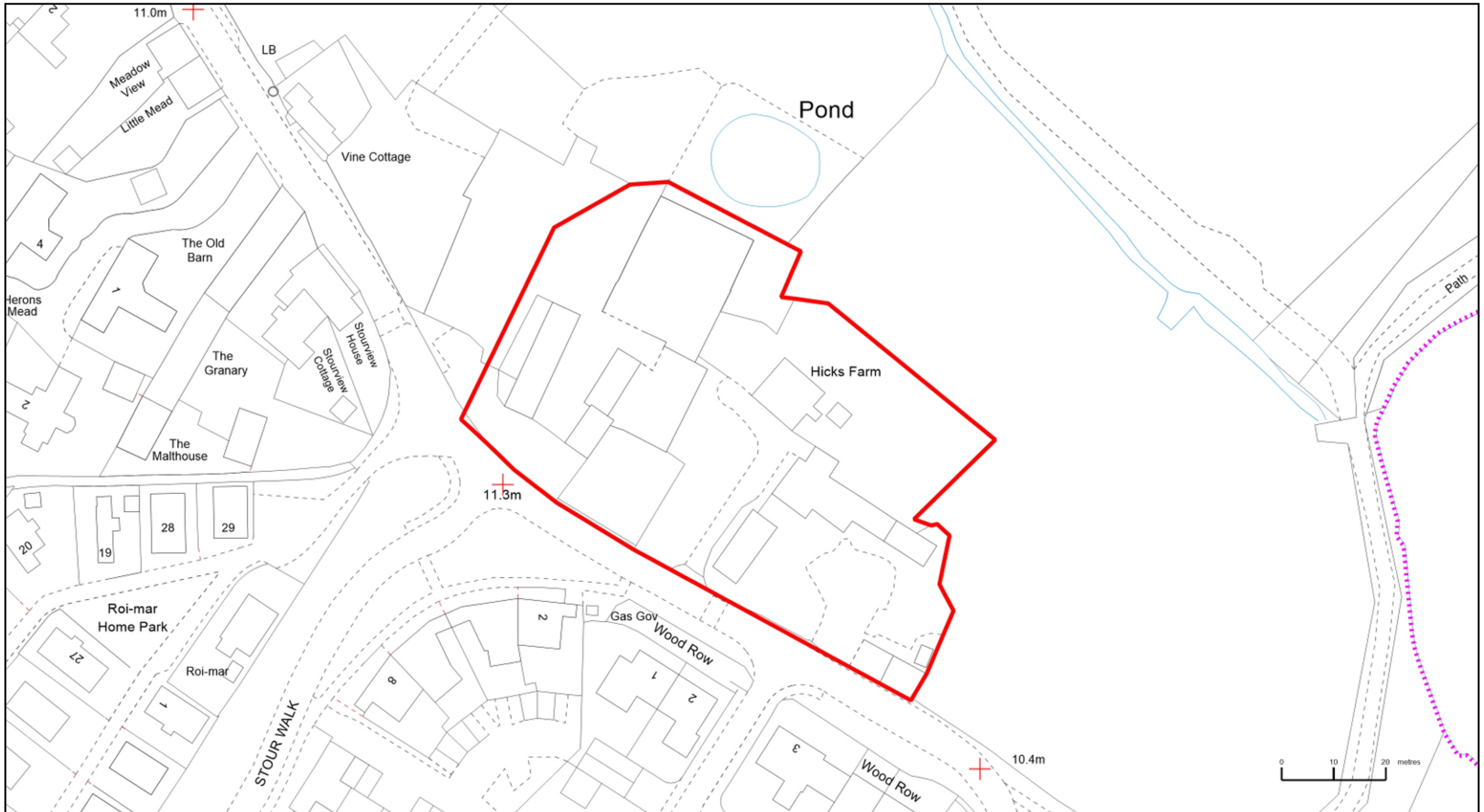
Background papers

n/a

Appendices

1. Area proposed for asset disposal and location
2. Hicks Farm, Throop Road - Heritage Planning team Historic Building Assessment 2 February 2017.

Appendix 1 Area proposed for asset disposal and location



Hicks Farm and outbuildings
Area for asset disposal

BCP_Boundary

Greenspace

Scale: 1:1000 @ A4

Date: 09 June 2026

Creator: Environment- Greenspace

N

Hicks Farm and outbuildings
Area for asset disposal

BCP_Boundary

Greenspace

Aerial Photography

AP-25CM-GB-LATEST

Scale: 1:1000 @ A4

Date: 09 June 2026

Creator: Environment- Greenspace

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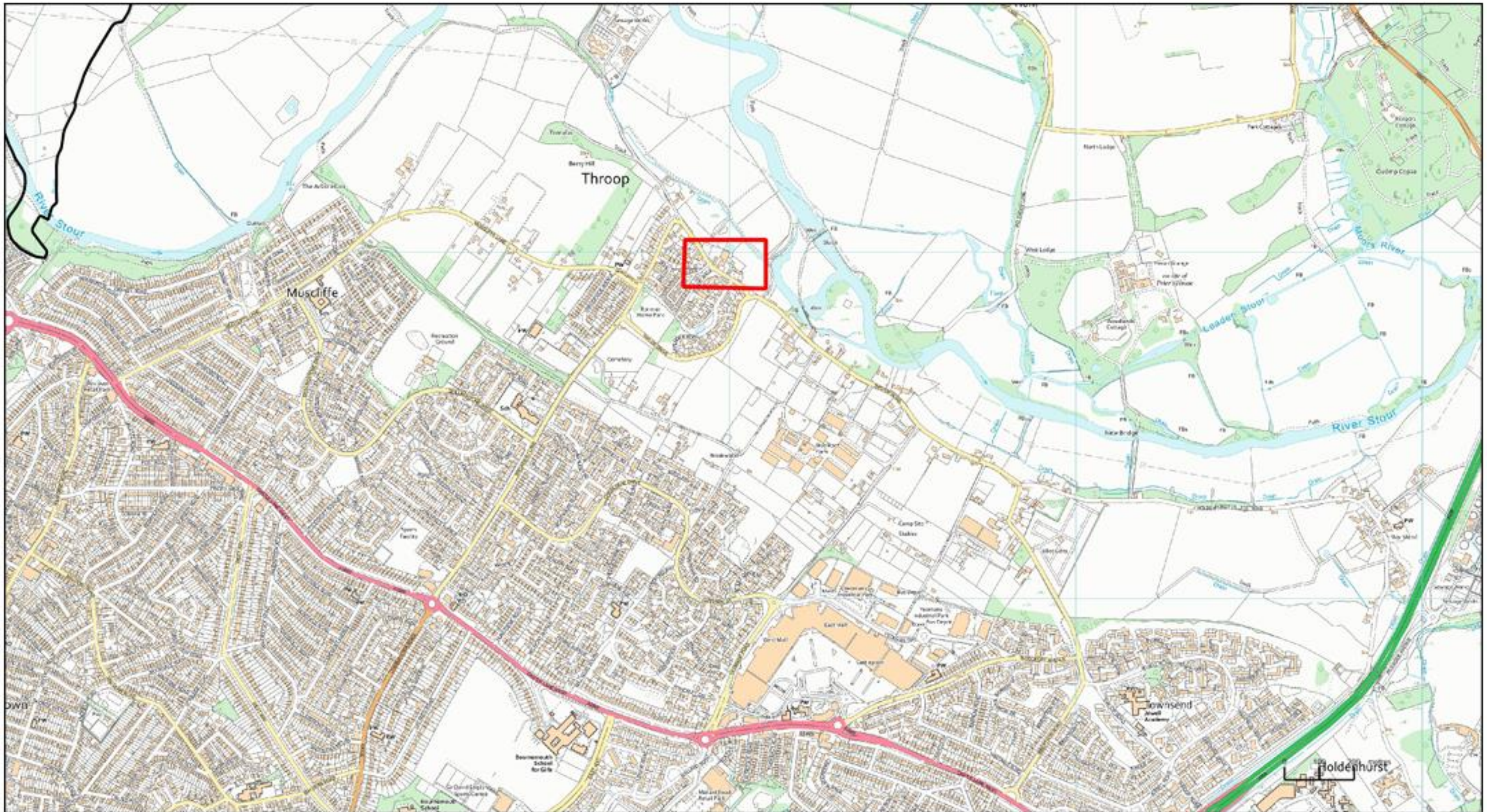


Hicks Farm location

BCP_Boundary

Greenspace

Scale: 1:15000 @ A4

Date: 18 June 2026

Creator: USER NAME

N

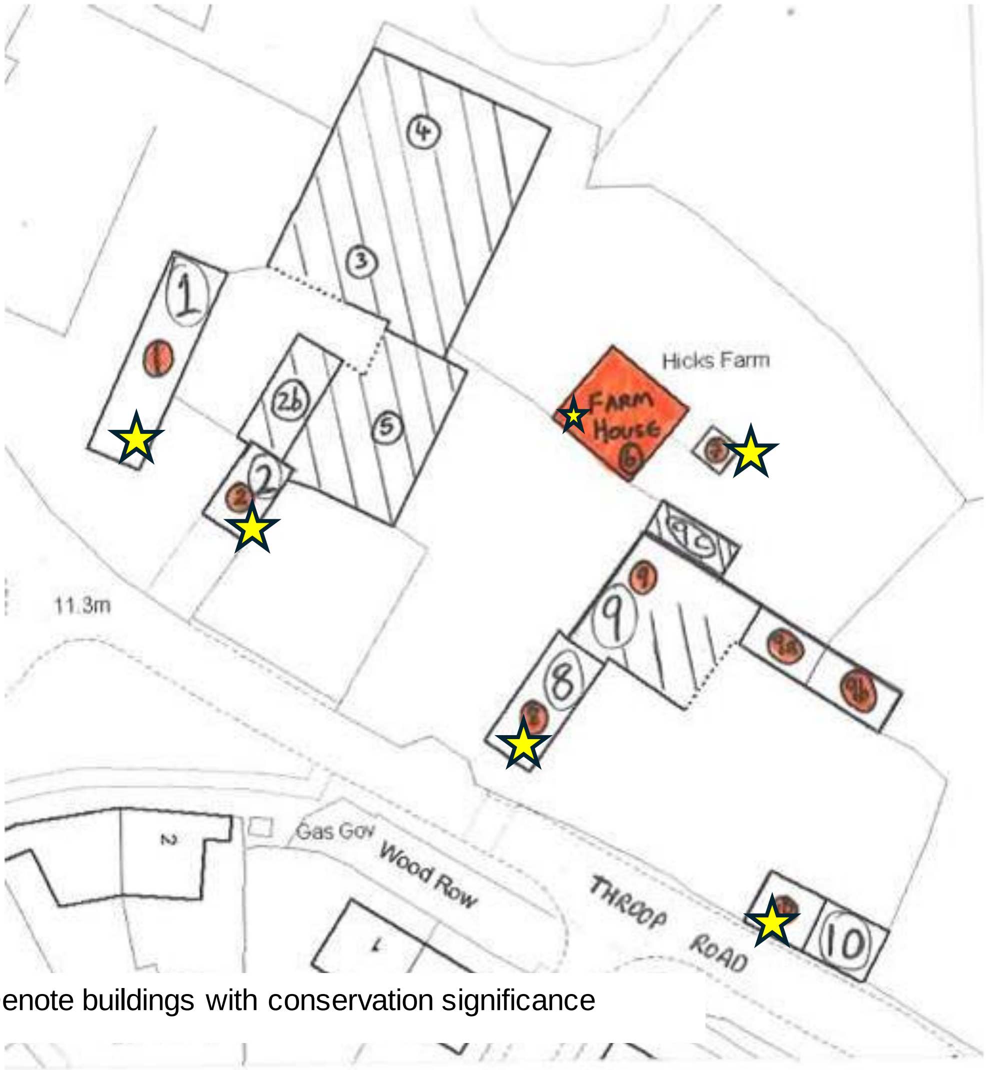
Appendix 2.

Hicks Farm, Throop Road - Heritage Planning team Historic Building Assessment 2 February 2017.

Hicks farmhouse dates to around 1800 and was Grade II Listed in 1976. The statutory listing covers the farm and any buildings within its curtilage which pre-date 1948. As a result, the brick buildings on the site, which date from the Victorian period, would be covered by the listing. Hick’s farm is also located in the Throop and Muccleshell Conservation Area which was designated in 1975.

As the site is covered by the listing and in a Conservation Area there are greater planning restrictions on what can and can’t be done. For example, there is a presumption against the demolition/removal of any of the historic buildings.

Although some of the buildings are in a poor state of repair their condition would not be a justification for their removal. However, there is clearly scope to remove several large modern structures on the site. It is important that any future proposals for the site retain and integrate with the existing historic structures. A map showing the buildings which should be retained are noted in red on the map below.



Denote buildings with conservation significance

A brief description of each building is noted below - although lack of reference to a feature does not mean that it is not important.

Building 1 The barn is of significant value and should be retained. Although there is scope to improve the roof covering the brick construction and timber roof structure and supports are important.

Building 2 The building is of significant value and should be retained. Although there is scope to improve the roof covering the brick construction, roof structure and openings are important.

Building 2b There is no objection to the loss of this flat roof breeze block building.

Buildings 3 & 4 There is no objection to the loss of these modern metal framed buildings.

Building 5 There is no objection to the loss of this modern timber clad building.

Building 6 The listed farmhouse should be retained.

Building 7 The brick outhouse/laundry, with slate roof, is associated with the farmhouse and of significant value and should be retained.

Building 8 The barn is of significant value and should be retained. Although there is scope to improve the roof covering the brick construction and timber roof structure and supports are important.

Building 9 Whilst there is no objection to the removal of the more modern aspects of this building the original brick walls and timbers should be retained.

Buildings 9a & 9b Whilst there is no objection to the removal of the more modern aspects of these buildings the original brick walls should be retained. Original timbers may also be present and consideration should be given to their retention.

Building 9c There is no objection to the loss of this modern flat roof structure.

Building 10 The barn is of significant value and should be retained. The brick construction, roof covering and timber roof structure and supports are important.