

INKPEN AND ROLFS FARM

**A BRIEF HISTORY
AND SUMMARY
OF THE PROPERTY**

1. INKPEN

The village lies below Inkpen Beacon and Walbury Hill, the highest chalk hill in England, on the edge of the North Wessex Downs within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), some eight miles west of Newbury and four miles south east of Hungerford. It lies close to the boundaries of both Wiltshire and Hampshire and is surrounded by other rural parishes and the village of Kintbury which has several shops and a railway station. Both the M4 and A4 are within fifteen minutes drive. The parish encompasses some 3,135 acres and the population is around 900 souls

Inkpen is made up of three settlements spread over some 2 miles with Lower Green to the West, Upper Green in the centre and Inkpen Common to the East. In the Domesday Book of 1086 it was known as Ingepenne, a settlement of some 600 acres and some 45 souls. The derivation of the original name remains obscure but in Saxon times "ing" translates to a meadow, such as would have existed in the then surrounding forests and "penne" is a hill. Another possible derivation is from Inga, a Saxon invader, who is reputed to have encamped on this hill.

The earliest written history of the village begins in 931, in the reign of Athelstan, a grandson of Alfred the Great, when the Saxon, Wulgar, left his land there in "three parts to his wife Oeffe and the fourth part to the Servants of God at Kintbury for the souls of himself, his father Wulfric and grandfather Wulffrere" (who first owned the land). On her death the land was bestowed to the Holy Place at Kintbury.

In Norman times the land was split into three manors, Hazlewick (or Strattons), Eastcourt and Westcourt. In 1290 there is a record that the Manor of Haslewick, situated around Upper Green, belonged to William de Stratton and his wife Scholastica. After the Strattons the land was successively held by the Knights Templars and the Knights Hospitallers. In 1309 Haslewick was held by Job de Hartrouge and in 1357 was taken for the Abbot of Titchfield in Hampshire who retained the land until 1758 when it was sold to Cuthbert Johnson. In 1793 Johnson sold Haslewick to Joseph Butler of Kirby House.

The Manor of Eastcourt was owned by the Abbot of Titchfield until 1537 when it was taken by Henry VIII. The Garrards, whose tombs adorn Lambourn Church, occupied the Manor in the second half of the 16th Century. It then passed through various aristocratic hands until it was sold by the Wallops of Farleigh to Lord Craven in 1731.

Westcourt Manor was the original name for Saddlers Farm and Humphrey de Ingpen, father of Roger, possibly owned this Manor in 1176 and it passed down through several aristocratic families until the 16th century when it was owned by the Spencers who built Titcomb Manor. It was eventually purchased in 1829 by Lord Craven.

Without a unifying Landlord there was no natural centre to the Parish and so even today residents have a strong sense of Inkpen being three linked settlements

A number of industries flourished in Upper Green, pottery and silkweaving among them, and in 1860 a rope walk was started. This was situated opposite the School and is still plainly defined, its straight lines running some 250 yards between the trees. This industry lasted but ten years when its owner, Mr Falkenor, discontinued the business. A sawmill, established in 1860 on a site reputed to have been used to make arrows for the archers at Agincourt, flourished until the middle of the 20th Century, its site now occupied by a small industrial estate.

St Michael's and All Angels Church is the oldest building in the Village, built in the 13th Century but restored and altered by the Victorians in 1896, and contains the stone effigy of Sir Roger de Ingpen, a Knight Templar of the 13th Century. The Templars first home was reputed to be close to Pottery Lane and this could account for the annual flowering of wild crocus and snowdrops in the Crocus field, bulbs brought to this country from monastic establishments in Italy, the Mediterranean and even the Holy Land. The flowering only started after the War when the field was deep ploughed and this action probably broke old earthenware pots containing these bulbs. This field is now classified as an SSI.

There are two houses of significance in the Village. The old Rectory, standing above the Church in Lower Green, was built by the Rector, the Rev Colwall Brickenden in 1695. It has a unique garden influenced by the great French Landscape Gardener, Le Notre, who laid out the gardens at Versailles. The second is Kirby House in Upper Green, built by James Kirby in 1771 and currently occupied by the Astor Family.

Above on the Beacon is the gibbett, originally erected in 1676 for the hanging of George Brownman (or Broomham?) and Dorothy Newman who had been convicted of murdering Brownman's wife and children. The present gibbet is the fourth erected on the site and owes its continuing presence to a Clause in the lease of Eastwick Farm which obliges the tenant to "keep the gibbet in good repair".

In September 1950 , while still at University, John Schlesinger with his company Mount Pleasant Productions, made his first silent film "The Black Legend" based on the 1676 murder. The cast included Robert Hardy and a large number of villagers. Schlesinger went on to become a well known international Film Director and Hardy a famous actor. The film is still available and is shown from time to time in the village hall.

2. ROLFS FARM

The farm is located in Upper Green at the junction of Post Office Road and Rooksnest Lane. The first record occurs in 1733 when "9 acres of arable land inclosed by agreement out of East Field to the Old Farm also known as Rolfs Farm". It is probable a timber framed and boarded building was built in the 17th Century, perhaps as a hunting lodge, to form the current building. The fire back in the drawing room has a date of 1640 but there is no record that this is original. The farm is shown on a road map of 1792 with no name and the first time the name Rolf appears on a map is on an Ordnance Survey of 1878.

In 1994 the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England carried out a survey of the farmbuildings and considered that the present outbuilding, now used as an annex, and the small barn were originally built as a stable and open animal shed in the early 18th Century which confirms the time when the property became a working farm. The farmhouse was adapted as a thatched half timbered brick building, part tile hung, in the early 18th Century and the dairy (now the pantry) and the east end of the Drawing Room with the Nursery above were probably added around this time. The first clear record of the farm occurs in the Parish Enclosure Map of 1815 and shows the house, stable and animal shed. The large Barn and the Granary were constructed between 1815 and 1841- the Tithe Map of 1841 shows the range of buildings. The trap shed, now the double garage, was added to the stable between 1841 and 1878. All these buildings were constructed by local labour and the Royal Commission does not rate them as being of any architectural significance.

The farmstead belonged to the Butler Family of Kirby House, and later the Rectory, for all of the 19th century and in 1870 the Reverend John Butler, Rector of Inkpen, succeeded his father. He died in April 1895 and the property passed firstly to his wife, Maria Anne, who only survived her husband by eighteen months dying in December 1896 and then to his eldest son John. It is noted in Maria Anne's Will of 1895 that "the site in Upper Green known as Rolfs Farm and then for many years past in the occupation of John Froom as tenant thereof". In 1909 John Butler died and the estate passed to his younger brother, the Reverend H.D. Butler, then Rector of Inkpen in succession to his father and at that date the farm was tenanted by W. Osborne. The Osbornes probably took over the tenancy in the early 1900's and in February 1925 bought the farm with 105 acres from the Reverend Butler for £2550. In June 1938 they sold the house and 43 acres for £1900 to Clifford Naunton Morgan, later to become an internationally recognised cancer surgeon, knighted in 1968. In March 1936 electricity had been brought to Upper Green, in fact a Wayleave from the Wessex Electricity Company proves that an 11,000 volt system was being carried across the farmland, but at the time the house was purchased there was no electricity or mains water connected and no bathroom or inside lavatory. The original privy was located in the rear garden where the group of Camellias now grow.

The main entrance to the farm was through a gate just south of the old trap room and stable and the dung heap was where the round lawn is now located in front of the house.

In 1938 the house was restored and updated with mains water and electricity provided. The original plans and photographs "before" and "after" are still in the house together with a water colour viewing the farmhouse from the south painted before the restoration by a local artist D. Moore. The farming activity continued and a pedigree herd of Ayreshires was built up. A national Farm Survey in 1941 details the use of the 39 arable acres "25 acres pasture, 7 acres mowing crops, 7 acres oats, 15 cattle, 12 poultry and one 1HP Electric Motor."

In September 1955 Champions Field of some 11.4 acres was purchased from Manor Farm for £950 and half an acre in the North East corner was conveyed to the Church Commissioners for the building of a new Rectory. This was subsequently sold by the Church Commissioners and is now named Linton House

In 1961 due to the difficulty of obtaining thatching straw and the death of the local thatcher, the thatch was removed from the house and barns, the roofs retimbered and tiled. The tiles on the small barn (originally the open animal shed) came from Christchurch Church, which had become redundant and

was demolished. The tiling on the farmhouse maintained the profile of the thatched eyebrows over the first floor windows. At the same time the house was rewired and treated for woodworm.

Sir Clifford died in 1986 and his wife, Lady Ena, in 1993. In 1994 the farmhouse and land was taken on by his daughter and son in law as only the third occupiers in the previous 90 years. As part of the necessary restoration all the ground floor windows on the south side were replaced with new oak frames and leaded lights, a chemical damp course fitted, both chimneys repointed and chimney guards fitted. Guttering with old cast iron troffins were fitted round the house, the kitchen completely replaced and a new two oven Aga installed. The dining room fireplace, which had been bricked up, was reopened to reveal the inglenooks and a Jotul woodburner fitted. The bathroom and downstairs lavatory were fitted with new toilet ware, a small shower room installed alongside the bathroom in what had been a storage cupboard and a washbasin fitted in the west double bedroom. A small conservatory was added on the east side of the drawing room and the old stable, which had been used as a two room living space for a farm worker until after the War and thereafter used for storage, was restored and a small washroom added together with a woodburner in the living room.

This annex was also treated with a chemical dampcourse and the garage timbers and loft treated for woodworm.

The property now consists of the following accomadation. All dimensions approximate.

Brick porch to oak front door leading to a small brick floored Entrance Hall (6' x 6')
Doors to Dining room (12' x 19') with brick floor, Jotul Woodburner and two radiators
and Drawing Room (18' x 18') with oak flooring, large open fire, three radiators and
access to Conservatory (8' x 11') added in 1995.

Stable door from Dining Room to brick floored Kitchen (12' x 14'), sink, 2 oven AGA
Calor Gas Cooker and seperate 4 burner hob, fitted wooden cupboards, Corian
worktops, telephone extension socket. All fitted 1994.

Access from kitchen to old Dairy, now a Pantry (12' x 7') with tiled floor and small
annex containing electricity meter, main fuses, burglar alarm control box, main water
stop valve with Water Softner connected (2010) & a TT Submersible Pump (2008)

Kitchen Door access to back porch with cupboard and to small utility room (7.5' x
4.5') with Danesmor oil boiler (1985), central heating controls, Belfast sink and
plumbing for washing machine.

Adjacent covered access to brick and tiled outbuilding (15' x 10') built in 1948 housing
2500 litre oil tank, coal and wood bunkers, Calor Gas cylinders and storage for
boots, coats etc.

Access from Dining Room and Drawing Room to brick floored lobby with radiator
and smoke alarm. Door leading to small downstairs lavatory (6' x 5') with hand basin
Small passage between Dining Room and Drawing Room housing main telephone
socket, understairs storage cupboard and wall safe.

From lobby access to stairs to first floor landing (21' x 3') with radiator and linen
cupboard containing new hot water cylinder fitted with immersion heater (2009).

Dressing Room (11' x 6' average) with built in oak cupboard and radiator

Double Bedroom 1 (11.5' x 10') with built in cupboards, radiator and access to
Nursery (9.5' x 14') with radiator. This was reputed to be the visiting tailors room in
the 19th C

Double Bedroom 2 (13' x 11.5') with radiator and fireplace (unused).

Telephone extension and burglar alarm panic button.

Family Bathroom (10' x 6.5') with heated towel rail and access to roof space. Separate
shower room adjacent (4' x 4'). New bath, basin and lavatory, shower fitted in 1994.

Double Bedroom 3 (11' x 13.5') with built in oak wardrobe, basin, radiator and
fireplace (unused) with door access to under eaves storage.

All rooms, with the exception of the Bathroom and downstairs lavatory, which were added in 1938,
show the original beams and timber frames.

Mains water (unmetered) from Thames Water. Electricity from Southern Electric and Calor Gas

(Kitchen) are connected. Fixed line telephone service and Broadband from BT. Council Tax Band G Central Heating System installed in 1948. New pump and valves fitted in 2002. New program timer in 2007.

Drainage to septic tank, built in 1938, with soakaway through Barn Meadow (see map). In 1998 a main sewer was laid under Post Office Road and the property can be connected, subject to the necessary planning permissions and Water Board charges.

Outside Original Trap shed and stable now a double Garage (15' x 19') with two room annex consisting of Living Room and Double Bedroom (both 13' x 9.5'). S separate wash room (5' x 5') fitted with basin (hot water through Triton) and lavatory served by Saniflo with soakaway under daffodils by Yukon cherry in front lawn. Above the old hay loft part boarded and used for storage. The garage doors were replaced with an electric/manual rollover door in 2006 and the South end reboarded in 2010.

NOTE

The pantry floor is some 18" below the main house level and in exceptionally wet conditions has been known to flood to a depth of about 1". For this reason all electrical equipment is raised above the floor on blocks and gratings are also fitted below the tiled storage shelf. To combat this situation a TT submersible automatic pump has been fitted below the tiled floor at the entrance to the pantry annex. This pump outputs to the drain outside the utility room and thence to the septic tank. Any water seeping into the pantry is completely clean and leaves no tidemarks.

The garden, partly walled in 1997/8, covers some 2.0 acres and has been mainly created by the current owners. It consists of large lawns, herbaceous and shrub borders, mature trees including a 250 year old oak by the drive gate, orchards, kitchen garden with fruit cage, original well (now covered), large pond, pergola, 16' x 6' aluminium greenhouse erected c 1955 and supplied with electricity from the main barn (a private meter is fitted to monitor electricity useage), 8' x 6' plastic greenhouse (2004), chicken house (1998), pigsty (1946) and an old wooden granary supported on staddlestones (c 1840) now used as a workshop. This building was reboarded and reroofed in 2003/4 with electricity provided from the main barn. Metered water from the farm supply is available from two taps in the kitchen garden.

3. FARMYARD AND FARM.

The Farmyard, covering some 1.5 acres, houses the main barn containing the electricity supplies, fuses and meter and is connected to the 18th C animal shed in an L shape. In the 1940's the Atcost open cattleshed with hard standing and electricity supply from the main barn, the Dutch Barn and Tractor Sheds were added. The metal framed galvanised covered cattle shed with hard standing was added in the early 1970's and reroofed in 2009 and has been adapted to provide stabling. At the rear of the Tractor shed additional stables for three horses, with electricity connected, were built in 1994. Metered water (see map) is available through two standpipes - one on the south east corner of the Main Barn with the other supplying a drinking trough on the northeast corner of the Atcost. One meter is located at the entrance to the farmyard from Rooksnest Lane and the other is located on the north side of the old farmhouse dairy. Drainage from the Barn is piped through Barn Meadow. Three mature poplars, planted in 1943 dominate the area. New beech, ash, cherry and walnut trees have been planted around the eastern perimeter of the farmyard. There is ample space for the parking of agricultural machinery.

The Main Barn is of traditional structure and form. It is timber framed with a hipped roof, has queen strut and collar trusses and was constructed by local labour between 1815 and 1841. The two large doors on the western side sit under hipped porch roofs and these, together with the one on the southeastern corner, mark the entrances to the original threshing bays. An unusual structural feature is the way in which it was built around and over the east end of the original animal shed. The lighting was rewired in 1994 and the latest Electricity Safety Test was carried out in October 2008. Guttering fitted in 1996. The timbers were treated for woodworm in 1998 - this treatment carries a 20 year guarantee. The weight of the concrete tiles, which replaced the original thatch in the early 1960's, have caused some distortion to the east wall which has been reinforced with an external RSJ and further internal strengthening with additional cross beams and wire stays was carried out in 2006. The ridge tiles were remortared in 2004 and the interior of both the Barn and animal shed were repainted in 2007.

The Farmland consists of six fields bounded by hedges. Barn Meadow (once two fields Upper and Lower), Leyfield, Middle Field, Muddy Bottom (once three fields), Costers (once two fields Costers and Costers Rogers End) and Champions. Five are contiguous with Champions accessed from Leyfield across Post Office Road. The land is graded 3/4. All have water available but Champions and Costers are not connected to drinking troughs. The total arable area is 51 acres. The presence of free standing oak trees in Muddy Bottom, Costers and Barn Meadow show where the hedges divided these fields until after the War. New trees have been planted in Barn Meadow. In addition there is a spinney, of amenity value only, covering some 5 acres, through which runs a stream mainly fed by field drains and the storm drainage from Rooksnest Lane. The fields were refenced and gated in 2004/5 are currently let to a local contractor, Malcolm Tucker, under a Farm Business Tenancy Agreement which expires in April 2015 and are all put down to grass. The farmyard, buildings (less the tractor shed) are also currently let to Malcolm Tucker, who is the tenant of Leyfield bungalow, under the five year FBT expiring in April 2015. The buildings are utilised for calf rearing and storage and the yard for parking his agricultural contracting machinery. The land is used for hay and grazing of horses. He also utilised the South East area of the Main Barn for general storage facilities. This use is free of charge with one months notice to quit

The tractor shed is currently let to Steve Cordrey on one months notice. Part is used for storing motor cars and the rest for general use.

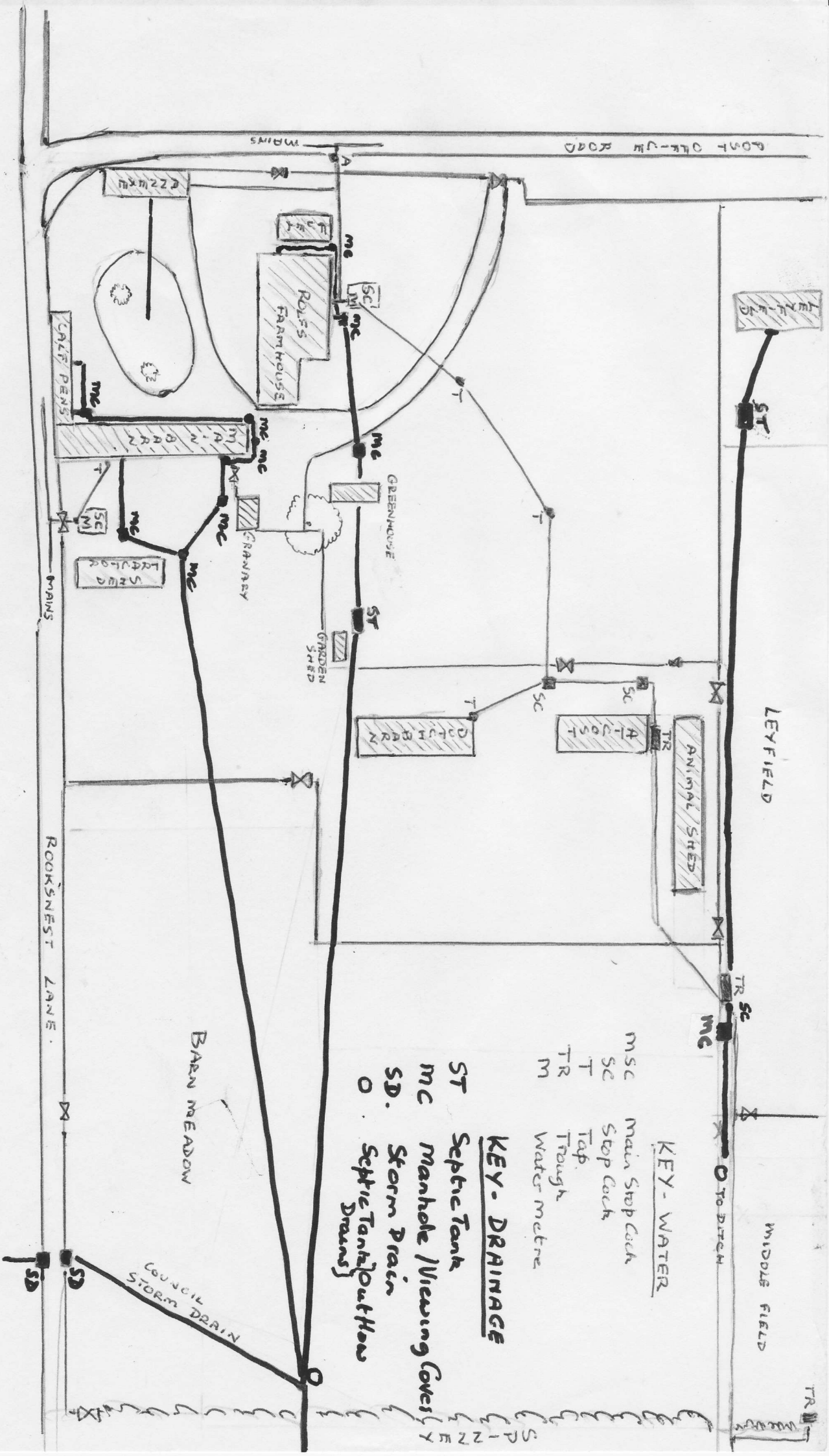
The land contains two Rights of Way, one running North/South across Barn Meadow from Rooksnest Lane and thence along the boundary between Leyfield and Middle Field with the other East/West along the northern boundary of Champions. Access is provided through self locking gates which are the responsibility of the Parish Council.

The Electricity Board pays an annual wayleave in March for five poles and an underground cable. The cable runs from the pole at the eastern boundary of the Spinney along the northern boundary of the Spinney and Barn Meadow, turning north at the gate between Leyfield and Middle Field and running under the existing right of way until it exits the farm boundary at the footpath gate.

Shooting rights over the land are in hand with a five year average of 20 pheasants

It is interesting to note that, for some unknown reason, the field names were changed by the Naunton Morgan's. The original names in the conveyance of 1938 were as follows:

Champions (originally three fields)	Upper Green Meadows
Leyfield	Burgess Close
Middle Field	Howparks Field
Upper Barn Meadow	No Name
Lower Barn Meadow	Howparks Meadow
Muddy Bottom (originally three fields)	Faulkners Meadows
Costers Rogers End	Costers
Costers	Buckridge Meadow
Spinney	Upper and Little Withy Bed



KEY - WATER

- MSC Main Stop Cock
- SC Stop Cock
- T Tap
- TR Trough
- M Water metre

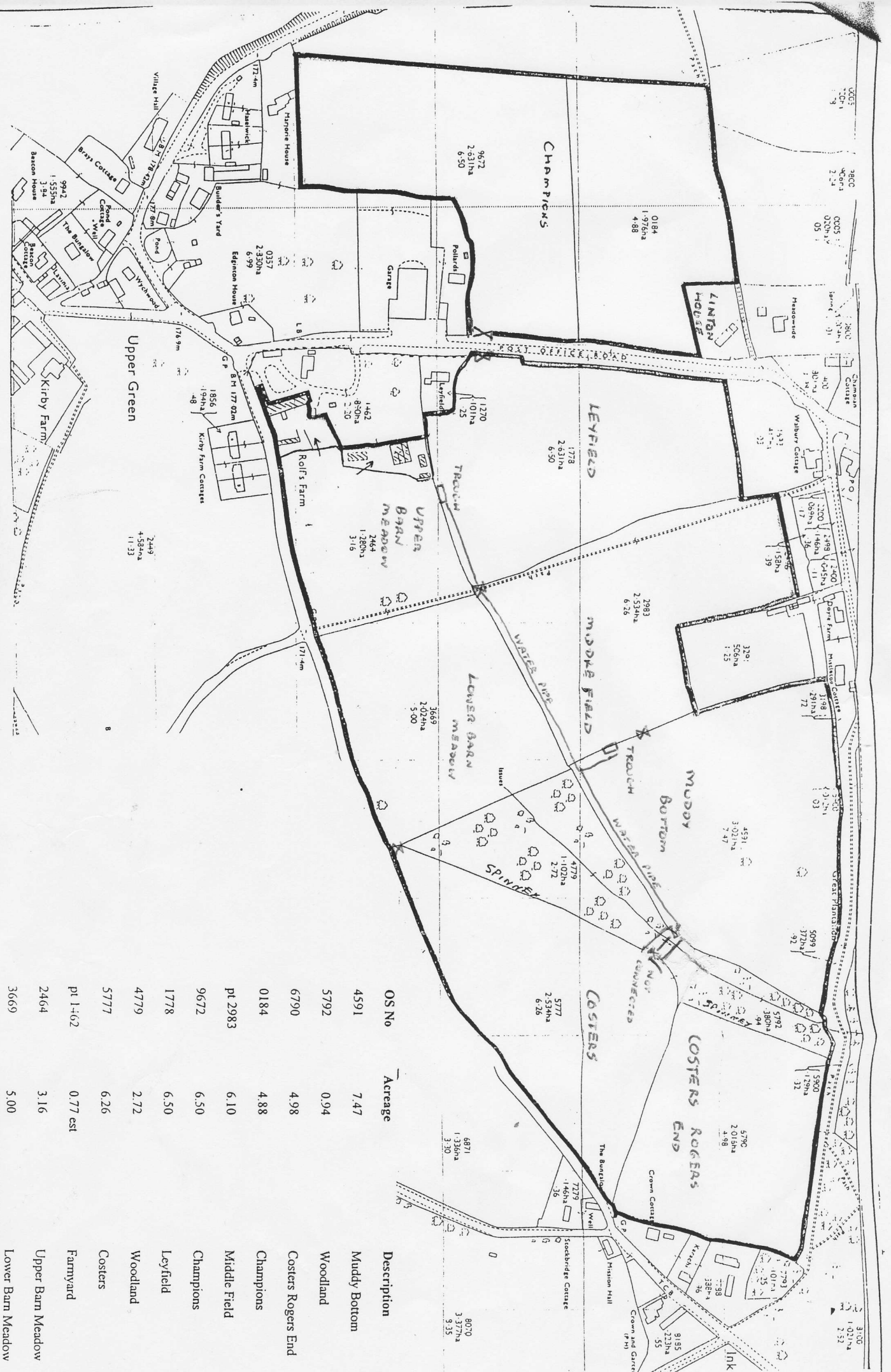
KEY - DRAINAGE

- ST Septic Tank
- MC Manhole Viewing Cover
- SD Storm Drain
- O Septic Tank Outflow

MAINS WATER AND DRAINAGE

ROLFS FARM - INK PEN

NOT TO SCALE



OS No	Acreage	Description
4591	7.47	Muddy Bottom
5792	0.94	Woodland
6790	4.98	Costers Rogers End
0184	4.88	Champions
pt 2983	6.10	Middle Field
9672	6.50	Champions
1778	6.50	Leyfield
4779	2.72	Woodland
5777	6.26	Costers
pt 1462	0.77 est	Farmyard
2464	3.16	Upper Barn Meadow
3669	5.00	Lower Barn Meadow

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Rolfe's Farm -
 Scale: Not to
 Date: July 1997

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References

Inkpen and its Church (1962)
Talk given to Inkpen WI by Mabel Bowen August 1931
Official Guide Hungerford RDC c 1950
Pamphlet "The Black Legend" - John Scheslinger c 1951
"Our Quiet Green Maze" - Inkpen Parish Plan 2002
Royal Commission Report on Rolfs Farm Farm Buildings (2000)
Conveyance Osborne to Naunton Morgan 1938) Held in File 2866 by
Various 19th C Abstracts of Title to Rolfs Farm) Charles Lucas &
Land Registry Title BK 348740. Land at Rolfs Farm) Marshall, Wantage
Knowledge of current owners