Padnell Grange – Structural Appraisal Summary

Summary of Conisbee Structural Appraisal Report, Ref. 251363/J Ham, dated 5 January 2026

Purpose and scope. Conisbee was appointed to assess the structural condition of the farmhouse and a nineteenth-century barn at Padnell Grange, Waterlooville. The survey was based on a visual inspection carried out on 5 December 2025. The farmhouse was inspected externally, internally and within three accessible roof voids; the barn was inspected from ground level internally and externally. No opening-up works were undertaken, the garage behind the farmhouse was excluded, and the report notes that hidden or inaccessible defects may therefore remain.

Farmhouse

Overall condition. The farmhouse is considered to be in an adequate structural condition for a building of its type and age. It appears to have originated in the second half of the nineteenth century but has been substantially altered and extended, particularly during the late twentieth century. Although the later work broadly imitates the original brick-and-flint appearance, the report considers much of the detailing and material treatment to be unsympathetic to the original construction.

Walls and alterations. The building is of traditional load-bearing masonry construction, generally with thick walls faced in flint and brick detailing. No significant external wall defects were observed that would indicate structural inadequacy, bulging or delamination. However, numerous original load-bearing walls have been removed or opened up to connect later extensions, with concealed steel beams assumed to provide support. A chimney breast and associated wall have also been removed. There are no visible signs that these alterations are currently failing, but their details would need to be checked if the building is refurbished or put to a new use.

Floors, cellar and roof. The original timber first-floor structure remains largely intact and the visible timbers were dry and in good condition. The cellar was also dry and showed no apparent structural defects. The main roof appears to have been substantially or entirely rebuilt when the house was extended. Its cut-timber arrangement is described as minimalist and unusual for an older building, with long spans and limited intermediate support. No present structural failure was identified, but the report states that strengthening would likely be required to meet modern design standards. Possible surface mould on roof timbers suggests poor roof-void ventilation. The roof over the rear addition appeared structurally adequate.

Implications for retention. Retention of the farmhouse is considered feasible, but any redevelopment should begin with a detailed structural review tailored to the proposed use. Existing load-bearing walls should be treated as structurally significant, and any further alterations should be designed by a structural engineer. The front portico is a late addition that is not structurally significant and could be removed, subject to local making-good works to the façade and roof.

Historic Barn

Overall condition. The barn is in a very poor structural condition and is described as structurally unstable. Its roof finishes had previously been removed because of concern over its condition, leaving the timber frame exposed to the weather and heavily saturated. The report concludes that decay has developed over a longer period, not solely since the roof covering was removed.

Principal defects. Significant timber decay is present at low level, particularly where east elevation studs meet the sole plate and at mortice-and-tenon joints that can trap moisture. One internal post is

severely decayed and split, a diagonal brace has failed, and the associated transverse beam has displaced, causing distortion to the east elevation. The lower west roof pitch is extensively decayed, with missing and incomplete rafters, and the intersecting gable over the west door is severely deteriorated and distorted. Large window openings have also been formed without adequate timber trimming or strengthening. Cracking is present in some masonry infill, and historic insect attack is visible, although the latter was not judged to have caused significant loss of timber section on the evidence available.

Safety and retention. The barn should be regarded as unsafe in its present condition. The report recommends temporary lateral restraint and propping where the frame is damaged before further investigation. If retention is pursued, extensive structural timber repairs and replacements would be required, including replacement of sole plates and lower portions of studs, repairs to historic alterations, and likely near-total replacement of the lower west roof pitch and intersecting gable. Because access was limited and high-level timber could not be closely inspected, specialist investigation is recommended once the structure has first been made safe. The report cautions that so much replacement may be necessary that very little of the original structural timber would remain.

Key Conclusion

The two buildings present very different retention prospects. The farmhouse is structurally serviceable in broad terms and can reasonably be considered for reuse, subject to a full structural review and likely local strengthening, especially to the main roof and any concealed supports associated with previous alterations. The barn, by contrast, is in a seriously degraded and unsafe condition. Retention would require immediate temporary stabilisation, specialist investigation and major reconstruction, with substantial loss of original timber fabric likely.

Note: *This is a concise summary of the structural appraisal and does not replace the full report, its photographs, plans, assumptions or professional recommendations.*