

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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NATIONAL REGISTER

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Witherell Farm

other names/site number Noggin Orchard, Turrill Farm

2. Location

street & number Town Highway 74 (Witherell Road) N/A not for publication

city or town Shoreham N/A vicinity

state Vermont code VT county Addison code 001 zip code 05770

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)  
*Eric S. Roberts* 2/22/93  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
Vermont State Historic Preservation Office  
State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

Entered in the National Register Date of Action 4/1/93  
Signature of the Keeper *William Byers*

Witherell Farm  
Name of Property

Addison County, Vermont  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>4</u>		buildings
<u>1</u>		sites
	<u>1</u>	structures
		objects
<u>5</u>	<u>1</u>	Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Agricultural Resources of Vermont

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/single dwelling  
Agriculture/animal facility  
Agriculture/agricultural field  
   
   
   
   
 

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/single dwelling  
Agriculture/storage  
Agriculture/agricultural field  
   
   
   
   
 

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Greek Revival  
No style  
 

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation stone  
walls weatherboard  
   
roof slate  
other wood  
   
 

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 1Witherell Farm  
Shoreham, Addison County, VT

The Witherell Farmstead encompasses approximately 117 acres of predominantly flat farmland off of Town Highway 74 in the town of Shoreham. Witherell Road divides the property with the 1857 farmhouse, and a small blacksmith shop to the north, and an early 19th century sheep barn and an 1809 apple-packing barn to the south of the road. This grouping of buildings provides the focal point of the farmstead with apple orchards surrounding the house to the north and more apple orchards, as well as haying fields, woodland and a wildlife area to the south. The farm has been in the family of the current owners since its beginning, when Ebenezer Turrill, the great great great grandfather of the current resident Sanford S. Witherell, Sr. purchased the original lot on June 11, 1785. It has been farmed continuously since the early 18th century and has retained its integrity as a working farmstead. All of the buildings have been preserved with specific attention to retaining historic detail and material.

**1. Farmhouse, 1857***Exterior*

Built in 1857, the current farmhouse took the place of an earlier farmhouse that was built by the Turrills approximately ten feet in front of where the current house stands. The area has produced various 18th century pottery sherds and is a possible archeological site that could yield information on the original house that was built in 1790.

The current farmhouse, Greek Revival in style, is two stories high, three bays wide by two deep, and has a rear one and a half story ell. The house is clapboarded and topped by a slate covered gable roof with cornice returns. A brick chimney projects from near the west end of the roof, and there is another large brick chimney on the back wall of the ell. The main block of the house is wrapped by a one story hip roofed porch covered with a standing seam metal roof and supported by paneled posts with capital detailing at the top. The central door is paneled and has its original, still functioning, doorbell--a porcelain knob that is attached to a bell hanging from the dining room wall. A heavy entablature runs under the porch roof. All windows on the main block have shutters. First floor front facade windows are actually French doors that open onto the porch. These doors have two vertical leaves made of ten panes each. The east wall first floor windows are floor length six over nine sash, while the first floor west wall windows and all second floor windows have six over six sash. In the gable peaks are rectangular louvered openings.

The ell, which contains the kitchen and a small sitting room that originally was a bedroom, extends two bays to the west beyond the west side of the main block.

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Shoreham, Addison County, Vermont*Interior*

The front door opens onto a central hall with a stairway that divides the interior, front of the house, with two large parlors on either end. French doors in the front two rooms open up onto the porch. The dark woodwork and hard wood floors convey the feeling of a grand old farmhouse. The back of the house, which may have been part of the older house, has 7 1/2 foot ceilings, while the rest of the house has 9 1/2 foot ceilings. The kitchen in the rear ell contains the original 1854 iron stove and oven in the brick hearth. There is an iron name plate which dates this feature. Another notable feature is that the family still has several unused rolls of original wallpaper and borders that were shipped from Virginia at the time the house was built. They are in excellent condition and the gold painting on some of them is still as vibrant as ever.

**2. Sheep Barn, c. 1820***Exterior*

Across the road from the farmhouse and to the east of the apple packing barn is a gable-roofed, rectangular, clapboarded sheep barn with a shed-roofed section on the east side. It houses the family's renowned flock of Merino sheep. It is built on a slight slope, eaves-front to the road, with the basement is exposed on the south side. The foundation is rubble stone although under the ell and along the roadside of the building it is concrete. The roof is covered with wood shingles. There are two small four pane windows in each gable peak. The front (north) wall has a large sliding door in the middle. The south gable end has a pass door to the left and a horizontal twelve pane window to the left of center. The south wall has at the basement level a twelve pane window on the left and two large openings, and on the main level two small windows. The east and north walls of the shed-roofed extension has two horizontal twelve pane windows.

*Interior*

The low-ceilinged ground level floor, set in a stone foundation, contains beams made of hand-hewn timber with the bark still intact, and has an earthen floor. This area housed the sheep and historically opened up onto grazing fields.

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Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 3Witherell Farm  
Shoreham, Addison County, Vermont**3. Apple-Packing Barn, 1809***Exterior*

The apple-packing barn is similar to the sheep barn. It is believed that it was originally built in 1809 as a haying barn. The barn is located with its eaves front close to the road. It has a wood shingle-covered gable roof, clapboarded walls, and a rubble stone foundation. Originally the siding was vertical boards with space between the boards. When it was turned into an apple-packing barn in the late 19th century, the building was clapboarded over so the workers could sort the apples in the fall without cold air blowing through the cracks. The gable peaks have four pane windows. The east wall has the remains of a door visible to the left and a sliding door made out of novelty siding to the right. The front (north) wall has a large sliding door. On the west end is a shed roofed extension, with doors at the ground level.

*Interior*

The original timber framing structure is still intact underneath. A date scratched on the surface of one of the framing timbers of the east wall dates the barn to 1809 and is still visible. The lower floor contains hand wrought beams which still have their original bark on them. A shed-roofed addition to the south end of the ground floor houses an office and work-shop used by the current owner's family. There is still evidence of the barn's apple-packing days as old apple baskets exist, lying around on the second level of the barn. The entrance is on the north side of the east side wall which also contains a small window on its south side. A row of small rectangular windows line the south wall of the second level of the barn.

**4. Blacksmith Shop, early 1800s**

To the west of the farmhouse on the north side of the road is a small clapboard, gable-roofed building, which was once used for general farm operations such as a blacksmith shop, woodworkers shop, carpentry shop and subsequently used as a workshed. A 1 1/2 story structure, it currently functions as a garage. There is a small window in the southern gable end of the structure with the eave side parallel to the house. The upper 1/2 story was historically used as a granary for the farm. The interior framing units are still intact.

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Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 4Witherell Farm  
Shoreham, Addison County, Vermont**5. Wind Circulator, c. 1990**

On the south side of the road in the center of the western apple orchard sits a wind circulator, which is used to circulate the air down closer to the ground during frosty nights in spring or fall. It is a new addition to the farm, made of a light metal, and helps with the apple production which started in the early 1800s. The structure stands approximately 30 ft. high and has a large blade that circulates warmer air down to the frost on the orchard below. Due to its age it is not a contributing structure.

**6. Landscape**

The landscape is a very important element of the farm. To the north of the house the land slopes upward, with a row of mature poplar trees along the top of the ridge. These poplars protect the apple trees from strong winds by slowing down the north wind that could blow the apples off the trees. The original apple orchard dates from the early 1800s. Across Witherell Road, the land slopes downward to a flat plateau. There are hay fields on the outer western and eastern sides of the property. Between these fields is the apple orchard. There is a wildlife area and small man-made lake in the middle of the property. There is a 20 acre woodlot that extends from the western corner of the main parcel of the property. It contains hardwood trees, such as elm, beech, sugar maples, and hickory. Surrounding the house is a row of mature evergreens and across the front, along the edge of the road, a row of old honey locust trees.

The boundaries of the property are marked by a variety of historic features. A hedgerow of Norway Spruce, planted in the 1920s, in the southern part of the property, and another hedgerow along the western boundary that has red pine, Norway spruce, white poplar, hickory, red oak, and butternut. Along the eastern border of the farm is the remains of a "snake" rail fence, and to the south, near the southeast corner, is a stump fence.

Withere11 Farm  
Name of Property

Addison County, Vermont  
County and State

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Agriculture

Architecture

**Period of Significance**

1809-1942

**Significant Dates**

1809

c. 1820

1857

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Unknown

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

\_\_\_\_\_

Witherell Farm  
Name of Property

Addison County, Vermont  
County and State

### 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 117

#### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	18	633110	4860500
Zone	Easting	Northing	
2	18	633650	4860530

3	18	633690	4859980
Zone	Easting	Northing	
4	18	633120	4859980

See continuation sheet

#### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

#### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

### 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Evelyn M. Speciale

organization University of Vermont Historic Preservation date May 5, 1992; revised 1/1993  
Program

street & number Wheeler House telephone (802) 656-3180

city or town Burlington state Vermont zip code 05401

#### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

#### Continuation Sheets

#### Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

#### Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

#### Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

#### Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Sanford S. Witherell, Jr.

street & number Noggin Orchard, Witherell Road telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town Shoreham state Vermont zip code 05770

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.



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Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 1Witherell Farm  
Shoreham, Addison County, VT

The Witherell Farm, which includes a Greek Revival style house, two barns, a blacksmith shop, an apple orchard, and a variety of exceptional historic fences covering 117 acres in Shoreham, Vermont, has been in the same family for over two hundred years. The farm has statewide and local significance under criteria A and C, and is being nominated under the Multiple Property submission, Agricultural Resources of Vermont. It meets the registration requirements for the property type farmstead. The Witherell Farm is an excellent representation of several important aspects of the history of Vermont agriculture. Its early history represents the historic context, "Sheep Farming, 1810-1910," as fine Merino sheep were raised here. In the decades around the turn of the twentieth century, this farm was among the first that exported sheep to the English and Dutch in South Africa and South America. Its later history is significant under the historic context, "Orchard Farming, 1820-1941," and it still continues to be a successful apple orchard.

The Witherell farm qualifies for nomination under criteria A for the significant contribution it has made to development of agriculture in the state of Vermont, Addison County and the community of Shoreham. Ebenezer Turrill, the original family owner, purchased the lot from Ephraim Doolittle, one of the founders of Shoreham on June 11, 1785, just 24 years after the town was chartered (October 8, 1761). Shoreham was one of the early towns of Vermont, noted for its rich soil and flat land for excellent farming conditions. The population of Shoreham in 1791 was 721 people at the time Ebenezer's son, Beebe Turill, owned the farm.<sup>1</sup> The farm stayed in the family from generation to generation. After Beebe Turill, the farm was owned by two of Ebenezer's grandsons, Royal Turill and Royal Witherell. Jennie Witherell, the great-granddaughter of Ebenezer, was the next in the family to own the farm. From her it passed to Charles R. Witherell, a great-grandson of Ebenezer. Charles R. Witherell granted the farm to his son, C. Leslie, who in turn granted it to his son, Sanford S. Witherell, Sr. In December of 1992, Sanford S. Witherell, Sr., deeded the farm to his son, Sanford S. Witherell, Jr.

During the last quarter of the 18th century and the first half of the 19th century the Witherell family engaged in diversified farming. The Shoreham agricultural census of 1850 shows that Royal Turrill's farm had 8 horses, 3 milk cows, 2 working oxen, 3 other cattle, 110 sheep, and 4 swine, and produced 440 bushels of wheat, 150 bushels of corn, 910 bushels oats, 370 pounds wool, 50 bushels peas/beans, 50 bushels potatoes, 200 pounds butter, and 30 pounds of cheese.

The Witherells were innovators in the area of sheep farming. Raising a large flock of

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<sup>1</sup> Thompson, Zadock. A History of Vermont: Natural, Civil and Statistical, in Three Parts. Burlington, VT: Chauncey Goodrich, 1842, p. 210.

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National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 2

Witherell Farm  
Shoreham, Addison County, Vermont

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Merino sheep in the late 1800's and early 1900's, they were some of the first Americans to trade to the English and Dutch in South Africa and South America, making four trips to South Africa in the 1890s. On a final trip in 1901 the steamer ship caught on fire and most of the sheep were lost. From 1940 - 1960 the Witherell farm raised a different breed of sheep: Shropshires. Vermont. The farm turned its attention to apple farming in the 20th century.

The Witherells became involved in growing apples, planting the first orchard in the early 1800s. Many Vermont farmers historically had fruit trees for their own use, but the Witherells became interested in apple orchards on a commercial scale in the early 20th century. As of the 1920s the north half of the farm was used for apple orchards, while the south half continued to be used for the rest of their farming. In 1946 the owner of this farm, Sanford S. Witherell, Sr., and four other farmers formed the Shoreham Apple Cooperative, the first cooperative of its type in New England, to sort, store, and market their apples from a central location. In its early years, these five orchardists produced 30,000 bushels of apples a year.

The farmhouse is a well-preserved Greek Revival style building with floor length first floor main facade windows and a large front porch with Greek Revival style posts. The interior is noteworthy for its architectural integrity. The kitchen retains much of its early appearance, and still includes the original 1854 iron stove and oven.

The apple-packing barn, originally built in 1809 as a hay barn, is representative of two important barn types in Vermont's agricultural history. It has the original vertical boarding spaced slightly apart to allow the hay to dry underneath the newer, early 20th century horizontal clapboards. The original material remains intact and the changes are not irreversible.

The sheep barn is a carefully preserved example of a prosperous sheep barn. The lower level has an earthen floor and the original hand hewn beams harvested from the farms own woodlot of indigenous hardwood trees (that still exists). The upper level, which once contained hay, is protected by a new roof replaced with shingles similar to the original so as to preserve the integrity of the barn.

**United States Department of the Interior  
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Continuation Sheet**Section number   8   Page   3  Witherell Farm  
Shoreham, Addison County, Vermont

The landscape retains many significant historic features and provides insight into past agricultural practices. The farmstead retains intact its original lot, which dates from when town of Shoreham was first laid out. The farm is located on both sides of Witherell Road in Shoreham, not far from Lake Champlain. The land slopes downward from north to south, forming a pocket sheltered from severe weather elements. The land formation and proximity to Lake Champlain provide an environment that makes the property very suitable for a successful apple orchard. Much of the open land in the center of the property is planted with apple trees, which are replanted periodically. Orchardists planted a row of poplars along the northern ridge of the property to protect the apple trees from strong northerly winds that could blow the apples off the trees. The house is also sheltered and shaded by trees: large evergreens along the sides and back of the building, and an outstanding row of honey locusts along the road in front. The 20 acre woodlot, located to the southwest of the farm, contains a variety of hardwoods that historically provided building materials for the farm. Many of the borders of the farm are still marked by historic fencing: a hedgerow along the western boundary south of the road, a stump fence at the south end of the property, and the remains of a "snake" rail fence along the eastern border of the parcel. The stump and snake rail fences are very rare survivors of their type in Addison County, and indeed the state of Vermont.

**The farmstead retains its integrity and is a wonderful representation of a working farm that has been preserved over two centuries by the same family and is still going strong. Sanford S. Witherell, Sr., the current resident, was one of the founders of the Shoreham Historical Society and has preserved the farmstead in a historically accurate manner. He has retained reliable records of family contributions to the community, which are numerous as they have been and remain one of the leading families in Shoreham. It is rich in heritage and is an excellent example of the history of Vermont agriculture covering diversified farming to sheep farming to its current success at apple orchard farming.**

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Continuation Sheet

Witherell Farm  
Shoreham, Addison Co., VT

Section number 9 / 10 Page 1

9. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Goodhue, Josiah F. History of the Town of Shoreham, Vermont, from the Date of Its Charter, Oct. 8th. 1761, to the Present. Middlebury, Vt.: A. H. Copeland, 1861.

Interview with Mr. and Mrs. Sanford S. Witherell, Sr., Shoreham, Vt., by Evelyn M. Speciale, Spring 1992.

Morin, Richard P. II and Peter Conlon. "A Growing Success: Shoreham Co-op Leads State Apple Growers." Addison Independent. 19 September 1991: 2A.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

UTM References (cont.)

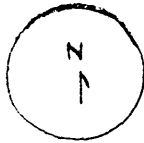
- 5. 18/633120/4859980
- 6. 18/633120/4859820
- 7. 18/633000/4860020

Verbal Boundary Description:

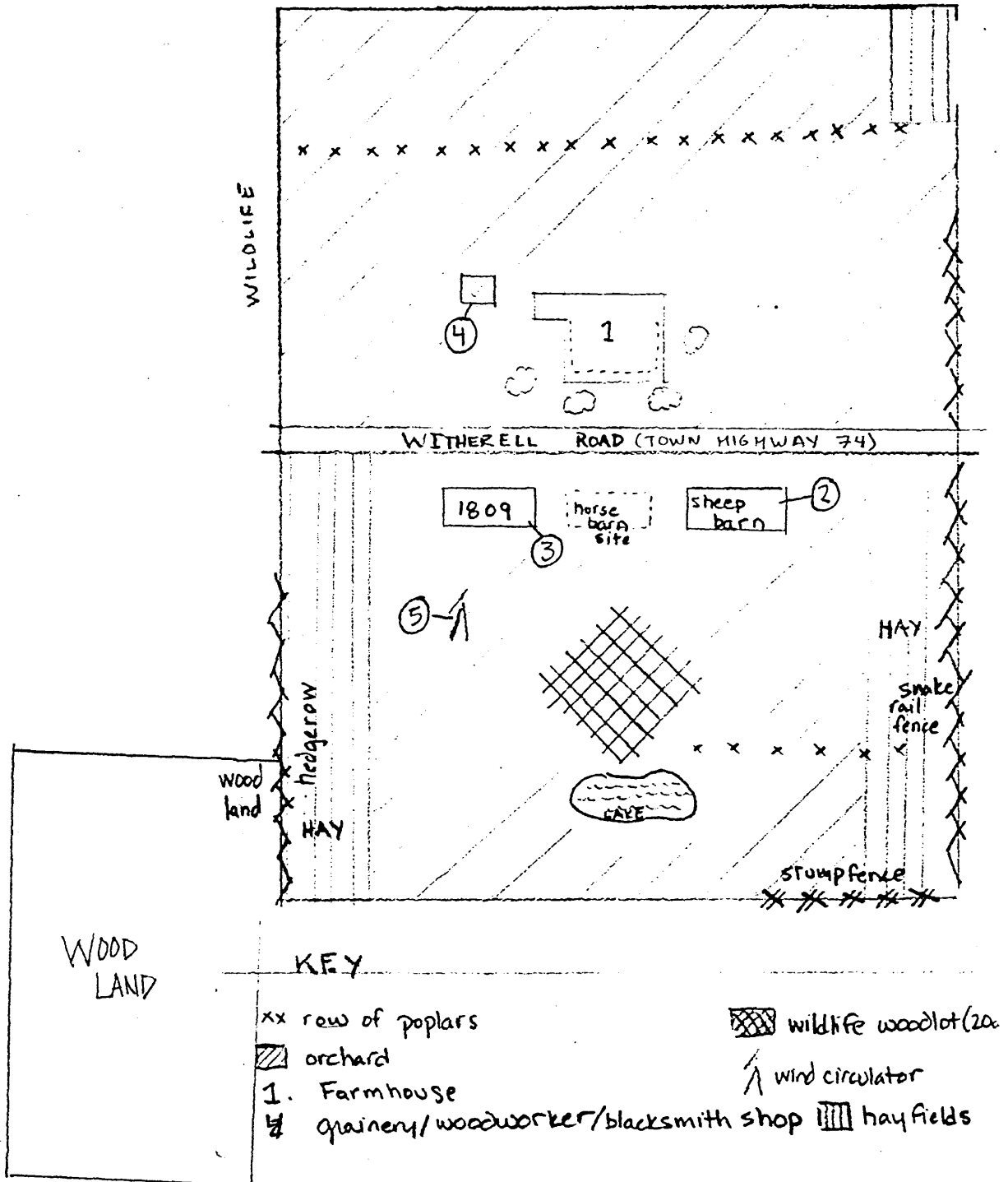
This property is located on both sides of Witherell Road (Town Highway 74) in Shoreham. It consists of two rectangular parcels, an approximately 100 acre parcel with a 20 acre parcel located at its southwest corner. The boundary is indicated on the USGS map. It is delineated by the polygon whose vertices are marked by the following UTM Reference Points: 1) 18/633110/4860500, 2) 18/633650/4860530, 3) 18/633690/4859980, 4) 18/633120/4859980, 5) 18/633120/4859980, 6) 18/633120/4859820, and 7) 18/633000/4860020.

Boundary Justification:

The land included in this nomination is the lot that has always been associated with the farm since it was established in 1785. The boundary includes the farmhouse, outbuildings, fields, orchards, and wood lots that have historically been a part of the Witherell Farm.



WITHERELL FARM  
 SHOREHAM, ADDISON CO., VT  
 (no scale, not to scale)



KEY

- xx row of poplars
- ▨ orchard
- 1. Farmhouse
- 4. grainery/woodworker/blacksmith shop
- ▩ hay fields
- ▧ wildlife woodlot (20)
- ↗ wind circulator