

June 27, 2023

John Hecht
Sespe Consulting, Inc.
374 Poli Street, Suite 200
Ventura, California 93001

**Re: Recommendations for Historic Preservation Compliance, Lockwood Valley Ranch,
Unincorporated Ventura County, California**

Dear Mr. Hecht:

ASM Affiliates (ASM) prepared these recommendations for the Lockwood Valley Ranch LLC's planned development located near 1986 Lockwood Valley Road (Project) in unincorporated Ventura County, California. The project area includes the Reyes Adobe, Ventura County Landmark No. 21, which has suffered demolition by neglect and was issued a Safety Violation. ASM has prepared this memo to help address the stipulations of the Code Compliance Agreement between Lockwood Valley Ranch LLC and the County's Code Compliance Division.

1.0 HISTORY OF THE REYES ADOBE

The Reyes Adobe was designated as Ventura County Historical Landmark No. 21 by the Cultural Heritage Board on November 15, 1971. A brief description and history of the property was included as part of the designating resolution. Additionally, a Historic Resource Inventory (HRI) form was prepared in 1990 with a paragraph summarizing its history under the "Significance" heading. Other than a personal recollection attached to a family tree on ancestry.com, research revealed no comprehensive history of the landmark to date.

The brief history provided on the HRI form states that the adobe was built by Rafael Reyes in 1854 (Garner 1990). However, at the time of Reyes' death in 1907, the *Ventura Weekly Democrat* published an obituary which noted that although Rafael and his family eventually moved to the ranch with his family, the homestead was first established by his brother Manuel Reyes in 1854 (*Ventura Weekly Democrat* 1907). The Reyes family owned the Triunfo Ranch in Calabasas, but a severe drought caused the brothers to move a herd of 2,000 cattle and 1,000 horses across the Tejon Pass and into the Cuyama Valley (Hudson 2020). Born in 1834, Rafael Reyes lived in Ventura but frequently visited the ranch property. In 1868, he married Maria Ignacia Ortega and the couple had ten children born between 1871 and 1892 (California Department of Public Health 2017). According to assessor records, a barn was built on the property in 1890, around the time Rafael Reyes used the property to raise bulls for bullfighting (Ventura County Assessor 2023) (Figure 1). It was demolished between 1964 and 1965. In 1894, the family made the decision to permanently move from Ventura to the Reyes Ranch in hopes that it would help Maria Reyes, who had contracted pneumonia (*Ventura County Star Free Press* 1940). After Rafael's death in 1907, the ranch was divided among their surviving children and Maria Reyes continued to live on the property (Hudson 2020).

The oldest son, Jacinto Damien Reyes, was born in 1871 (Figure 2). In 1900, he became the Forest Ranger for the Cuyama district, and the adobe served as both home and ranger station until at least 1925 (*Ventura Weekly Post and Weekly Democrat* 1925). Historic photos of the adobe and ranch taken around 1900 show the number of buildings on the property at that time (Figures 3 and 4). At the end of 1916, Jacinto married Glendora Georgianna Butke and celebrated with a Christmas celebration at the adobe. Although initially delayed by rain, the 40 guests assembled for a four o'clock dinner followed by the decorating of a tree with

tinsel and popcorn strings as the rain turned into an extensive snow (*Daily Free Press* 1917). The couple had one daughter, Gloria, born in 1919 (Social Security Administration 2014). According to personal accounts, a kitchen was added to the original adobe during this time (Hudson 2020). In 1927, Jacinto's wife was picking spinach in the garden when she saw yellow particles in the soil resembling gold. The discovery briefly caused a "stampede" of settlers to the property hoping to stake a claim while the soil was tested, but it seems it was not gold as no follow-up story appeared in the newspapers (*Santa Barbara Daily News* 1927).

After 30 years of service, Jacinto Reyes retired from the Forest Service in 1931. Several accounts of his career and recollections appeared in local newspapers around this time. After his retirement the family moved to Ojai but retained the ranch property until after his mother's death in 1940 (*Ventura County Star Free Press* 1940). In 1943, a deed conveyance from the Estate of Maria Reyes to Roy Wheatley was published in the *Ventura County Star* (*Ventura County Star* 1943). Wheatley was born in California in 1896 and married Florence Carville in Los Angeles in 1932 (State of California 2000; California Department of Health 2017). The couple lived in Los Angeles prior to acquiring the ranch property (National Archives at St. Louis 2010). Although it is not certain when the Wheatleys moved to the property, in 1948 they applied for a license to sell beer on the premises (*Ventura County Star-Free Press* 1948) (Figure 5). In 1949, an article about the oven built by Rafael Reyes appeared in the paper with the note that the present owner of the rancho, Roy Wheatley, was preparing the adobe structure so people could once again gather around the oven (*Bakersfield Californian* 1949). According to assessor records and personal accounts, these improvements included restrooms (1947), a storage area (1947), the addition of a kitchen and renovation of the original adobe, including a two-story addition (Hudson 2020). Events and meetings were held at the ranch for various groups included the Cuyama Legion (*Santa Maria Times* 1949). The Wheatleys began to rent rooms to hunters and people coming to fish in Reyes Creek (Hudson 2020).

The Wheatleys owned the property until 1952, when Florence became ill (Ventura County Assessor; Hudson 2020). The property was assessed at the time and photos were taken of the extant buildings, including the adobe and its two-story addition (Figures 6 and 7). According to the assessor records, Jeff Butler was the owner of the property until sometime in the late 1960s. During this time a cabin was constructed on the property (1956) along with a horse barn and corral (1960). At the time of the landmark nomination in 1971, the owner of the property was listed as Joyce Campbell. Assessor records indicate the barn was demolished sometime between 1964 and 1965 although it was not marked as demolished until 1972.

The landmark nomination does not specify a particular area of significance or provide an extensive history, but the HRI form checks the boxes of Architecture and Exploration/Settlement. The period of significance was also not determined at the time of the nomination, but the resolution has a condition which specifically states "alterations permissible except on the original two-room adobe and smokehouse," indicating that alterations such as the kitchen addition from the 1920s were not considered significant. This would suggest a period of significance ending while Jacinto Reyes and his family still lived in the adobe. ASM recommends a period of significance beginning the year the homestead was established, 1854, and ending the year the Reyes family sold the property, 1943.

2.0 SURVEY FINDINGS

Prior to conducting a survey of the Reyes Adobe, ASM reviewed the landmark materials provided to us by the County's Associate Planner. ASM's team then conducted an intensive on-site survey of the building on November 16, 2022. Members of the team met the professional qualification standards for Architectural Historian (ASM) and Historic Architect (Heritage Resources Group) as identified in the Secretary of the

Interior's *Professional Qualification Standards* (36 CFR 61), as well as a structural engineer specializing in historic properties from Silman, whose findings are provided in Attachment B.

The Reyes Adobe is located in northern Ventura County on Lockwood Valley Road two miles east of Route 33. The main building consists of a two-room adobe constructed in 1854 with several alterations and additions made over the years, including a two-story addition on the south end (c. 1947) (Figure 8). Other buildings on the parcel include a smokehouse (1854) located approximately 15 feet west of the main building, a cabin (1956) (Figure 9) and a washroom (1947) (Figure 10).

The condition of the adobe has been steadily deteriorating since 1972, with the assessor determining the building had no value in 2013 (Ventura County Assessor 2023). The roof has collapsed in most locations and several walls have fallen (Figure 11). The building has an irregular rectangular plan with a one-story rectangular section to the north containing the central original adobe surrounded by later additions. To the south is a two-story rectangular building abutting the earlier building and at one time connected by a porch.

The adobe walls of the later additions to the north are still standing, indicating the original side gable shape of the roof (Figure 12). Portions of these walls have been covered with cement and have the only recognizable fenestration. A one-over-one sash window is located on the north façade and a clerestory window in the upper section of the west façade (Figure 13). Although the central portion of the adobe is mostly deteriorated, a chimney located in the middle of the original section is still extant (Figure 14). Because most of the walls have collapsed, it is difficult to determine the fenestration pattern in this central section. A door was located near the chimney on the east façade, with another on the south end near the two-story building. Historic photographs and assessor records indicate the building had a porch spanning the section from the north addition to the two-story building added in the 1940s (Figure 15).

The two-story building is less deteriorated with its fenestration pattern still evident. Capped by a side-gable roof, the first story is constructed of brick with the wood frame clad in horizontal clapboards on the second story (Figure 16). A two-story porch once spanned the entire east façade, with an enclosed balustrade on the second story, but only posts and some braces remain. On the first story, a central door is flanked by wide one-over-one double-hung sash windows. There is an additional window of the same size located to the south, and a smaller fixed sash to the north. All the windows have wood casings. On the second story of the east façade an opening that appears to be a doorway is situated just to the north of the door on the first story. It is flanked by two openings, most likely windows, with additional windows located closer to the north and south corners.

The south façade has a window matching those on the east façade at the east end of the first story, and a narrow window to the west which at one time contained glass block (Figure 17; see Figure 7). On the second story there were originally two square-shaped windows but only the openings remain. There was also a small window near the gable end. On the west façade, some openings have been covered with concrete, but there are still two openings on the north end of the first story (Figure 18). On the second story, the deteriorating clapboard makes the fenestration pattern unclear, but one frame is located near the south corner with two additional openings to the north. A portion of the second story overhangs the first at the northwest corner and there is a door located on the angled wall below near the junction with the one-story building. The second story of the north façade has two square openings with an additional window in the gable end (Figure 19).

The smokehouse has a simple, rectangular plan with adobe walls and a wood-frame front-facing gable roof clad in corrugated metal (Figure 20). A wood framed door opening is located on the east façade. There is no other fenestration except for a small opening in the upper portion of the west façade (Figure 21).

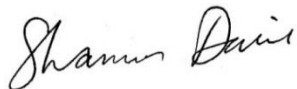
3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

As the Reyes Adobe is a Ventura County Landmark, a Certificate of Appropriateness for the project must be requested from the County's Cultural Heritage Board (CHB). The ASM team, including a historic architect and engineer, has concluded that the adobe cannot be structurally rehabilitated, and as such we recommend that the ruins are an excellent interpretative opportunity while the adjacent smokehouse, a contributing resource to the designated landmark, can be retained and preserved.

The remains of the adobe will be demolished to address the safety violation. The 1940s two-story wing of the residence was not identified as a contributing resource and will be demolished. An interpretative exhibit will be installed at the location of the adobe, designed to incorporate some of the adobe brick and/or other architectural elements that can be salvaged and reused as part of the structure of the exhibit. The content of the exhibit materials will be designed by Architectural Historians and/or Historians who meet the Secretary of the Interior's *Professional Qualification Standards* and will focus on the significance of the Reyes family and historic adobe construction methods and forms. The smokehouse will be preserved according to the Secretary of the Interior's *Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*, following the Preservation approach and further informed by Preservation Brief 31, *Mothballing Historic Buildings*. This will focus on the highest priorities on protecting the building from sudden loss, weatherizing and protecting the adobe from moisture penetration, and the monitoring of humidity levels once the smokehouse has been secured (Park 1993: 14).

Please contact me as needed if you have questions or concerns.

Sincerely,



Shannon Davis
Director, Architectural History
ASM Affiliates, Inc.
20 North Raymond Avenue, Suite 220
Pasadena, California 91103
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Attachment A: Photographs of Reyes Adobe
Attachment B: Structural Engineers Report

REFERENCES

Bakersfield Californian

1949 "Rafael Reyes Big Oven Was Social Center." July 8, p. 16.

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2017 *California, U.S., County Birth, Marriage, and Death Records, 1849-1980*. Accessed on ancestry.com; June 2023.

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1993 *Preservation Briefs 31, Mothballing Historic Buildings*. National Park Service, Cultural Resources, Historic Preservation Services.

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2023 Residential Building Records for parcel 02-140-21. Copies acquired May 2023.

Ventura County Star Free Press

1940 "The Six Reyes Boys Come to Town." December 12, p. 1.

Ventura County Star

1943 "Deed Conveyances." November 8, p. 12.

Ventura Weekly Democrat

1907 "Last Remnant of Once Noted Family" May 31, p. 1.

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Ventura Weekly Post and Weekly Democrat
1925 "Jacinto Reyes Has Fine Record" November 13, p. 3.

ATTACHMENT A: Photographs of Reyes Adobe

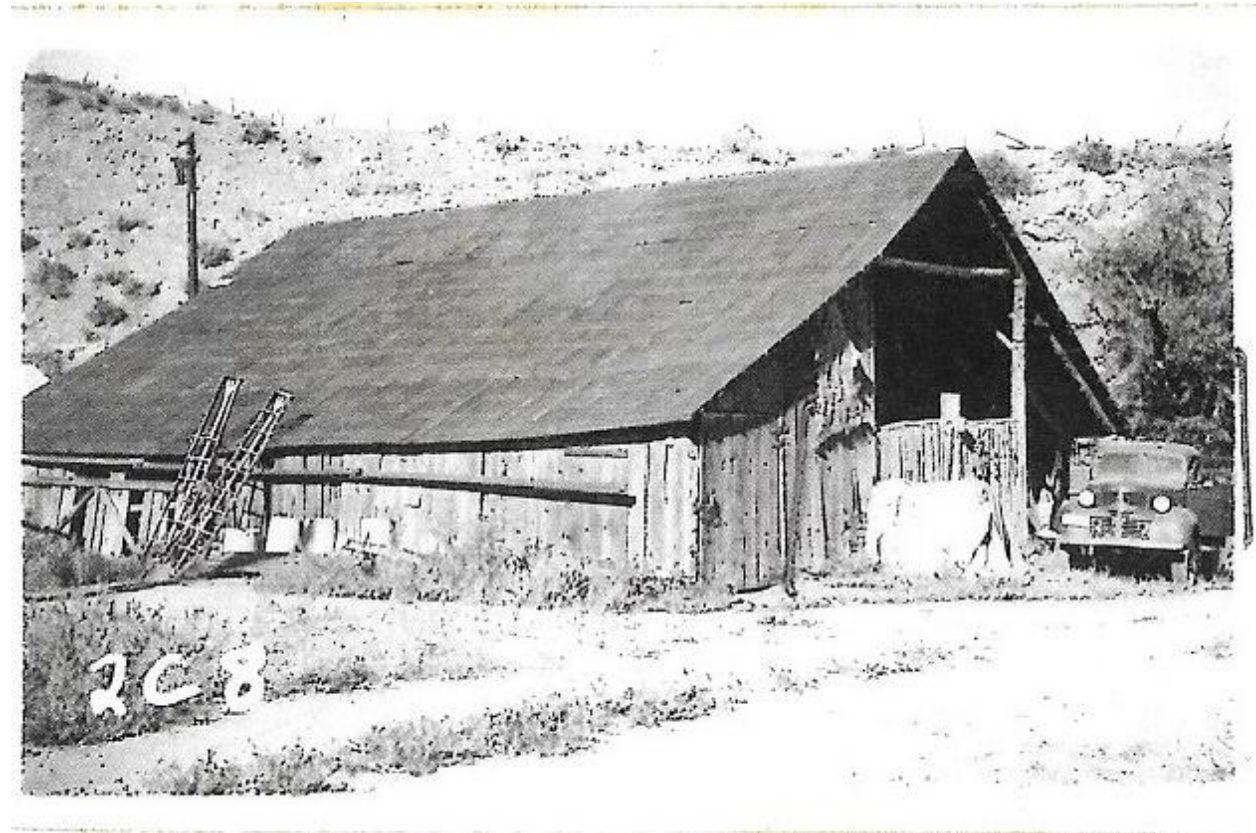


Figure 1. Image of the former barn (1890) from Ventura County Assessors Records, 1952.



Figure 2. Undated photograph of Jacinto Reyes, United States Forest Service.



Figure 3. Historic photo of adobe circa 1900 (Hudson 2020), view looking northwest.



Reyes Creek homestead as it century. Rafael Reyes and his homesteaded the ranch in family of six sons and three reared her grandson, Juan appeared near the turn of the wife - Maria Ygnacia Ortega 1851. There they reared a daughters. Mrs. Reyes also Reyes.

Figure 4. Historic photograph of Reyes Ranch, circa 1900 (Hudson 2020), view south of the adobe looking northeast

**NOTICE OF INTENTION TO ENGAGE
IN THE SALE OF ALCOHOLIC
BEVERAGES**

March 22, 1948

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:
Notice is hereby given that fifteen days after the date posted, the undersigned proposes to sell alcoholic beverages at these premises, described as follows:

2 MILES OFF HWY. 399, (on Lockwood Rd. Ventucopa).

Pursuant to such intention, the undersigned is applying to the State Board of Equalization for issuance on original application of an alcoholic beverage license for these premises as follows:

ON-SALE BEER.

Anyone desiring to protest the issuance of such license may file a verified protest with the State Board of Equalization at Sacramento, California, stating grounds for denial as provided by law. The premises are not now licensed for the sale of alcoholic beverages.

FLORENCE E. & ROY WHEATLEY.

Figure 5. Intention to sell alcohol filed by Roy and Florence Wheatley, *Ventura County Star-Free Press*, March 24, 1948. .



Figure 6. County Assessor Records showing adobe and addition in 1952, view looking west.



Figure 7. County Assessor Records showing adobe and addition in 1952.



Figure 8. Overview of adobe and addition looking southwest.



Figure 9. View of cabin on property built 1956, looking northwest.



Figure 10. View of washroom constructed on the property in 1947, view looking northwest.



Figure 11. View showing collapsed roof and walls of northern section of the original adobe.



Figure 12. Detail of addition walls which are still standing, looking southeast.



Figure 13. Detail of clerestory window on west façade of addition.



Figure 14. Detail of north side of original chimney.

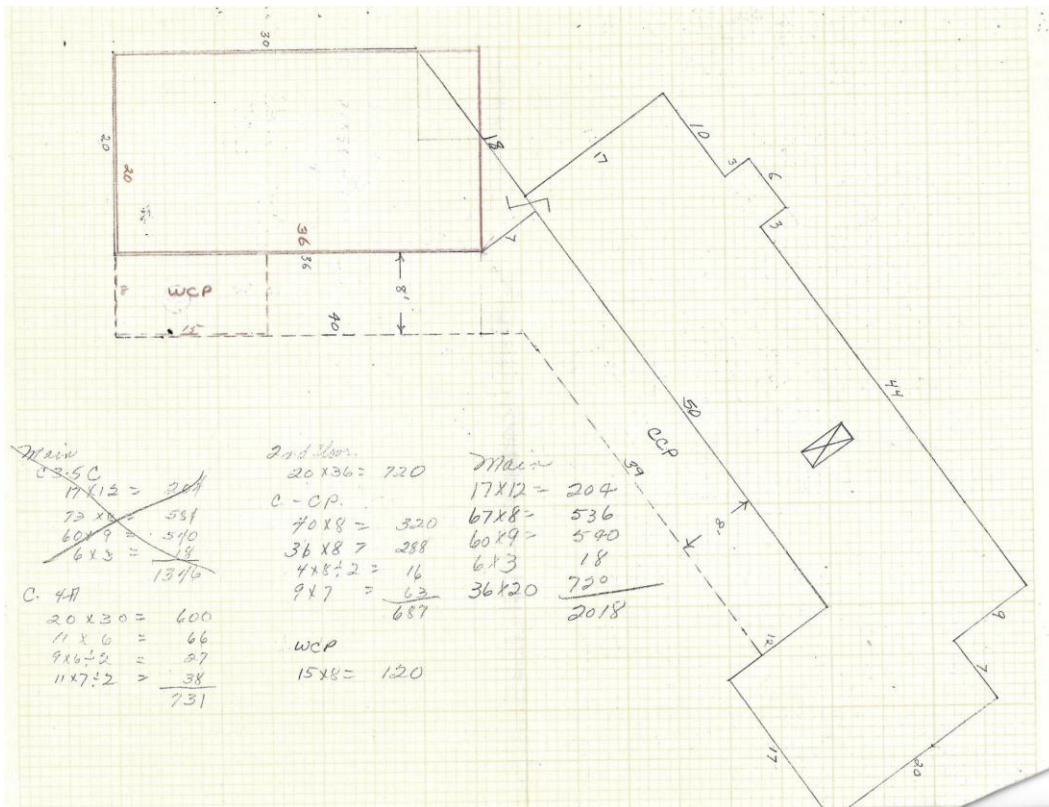


Figure 15. County Assessor Records, sketch of the adobe, 1952.



Figure 16. Overview of primary façade of two-story addition, view to the south.



Figure 17. View of south façade of two-story addition looking west.



Figure 18. Overview of west façade of two-story addition, view towards the north.



Figure 19. Oblique view of south façade of two-story addition, view towards the northeast.



Figure 20. East façade of smokehouse, view to the northwest.



Figure 21. West façade of smokehouse, view to the northeast.

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ATTACHMENT B: Structural Engineers Report

June 9, 2023

Shannon Davis
ASM Affiliates
2034 Corte Del Nogal
Carlsbad, CA 92011

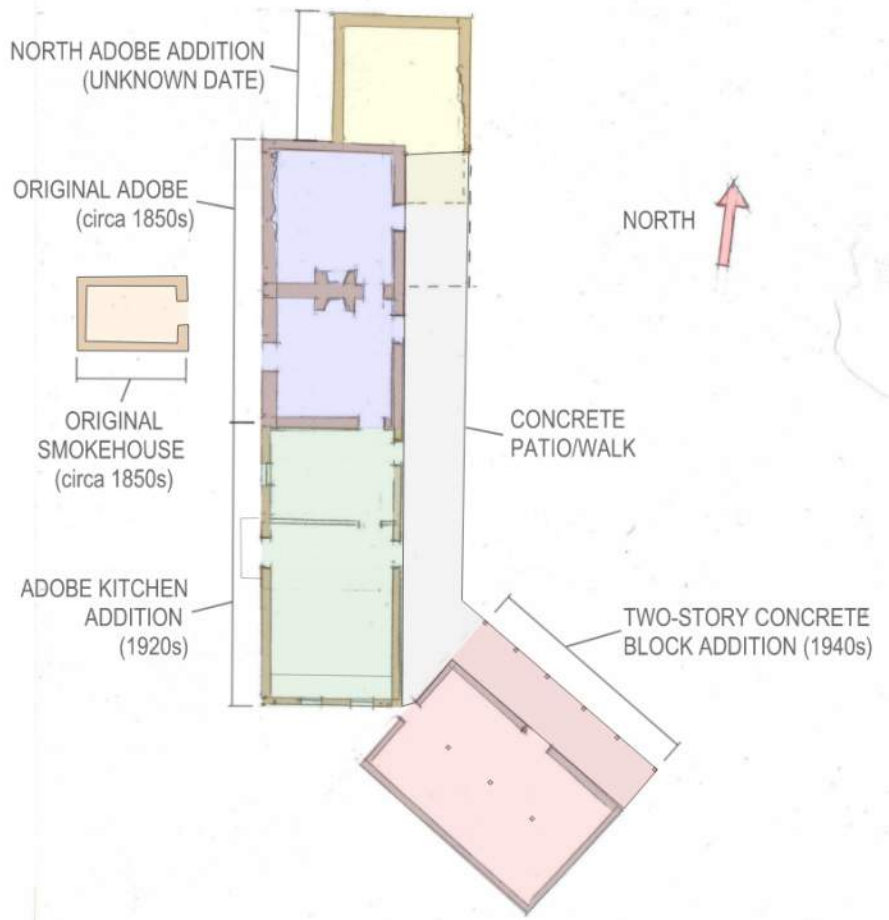
RE: Reyes Adobe
Silman Project No 3026.0030145

Dear Shannon:

The purpose of this letter is to document the structural findings of our November 16, 2022 site investigation of the Reyes Adobe at 1986 Lockwood Valley Road in Maricopa, California.

Building Overview & History

The Reyes Adobe consists of several different wings and periods of construction. A key plan has been provided below to help with orientation of the site.



Based on provided documentation the Reyes family came from Los Angeles and settled in the area with cattle and horses in the early 1850s. The Reyes Rancho grew to encompass much of Lockwood Valley and was used to breed fighting bulls. The original single-story two room adobe and the smokehouse date back to 1855. There is an adobe room to the north of the original structure, but it's unclear when this addition was constructed. To the south of the original structure there is an adobe kitchen addition that was built in the 1920s. A separate two-story structure was built directly to the southeast of the adobe in 1940s. The two-story addition is constructed of unreinforced concrete blocks with wood framing at the floors, roof, and porch. The Reyes Adobe was designated as Ventura County Historical Landmark No. 21 by the Cultural Heritage Board on November 15, 1971.

The adobe building (including all additions) is about 75 feet long in the north-south direction and 20 feet wide (max) in the east-west direction. The original 1850s structure is on the order of 500 square feet. The 1850s adobe smokehouse to the west of the building is about 10 x 15 feet in plan. The two-story 1940s addition to the southeast of the adobe has a plan footprint of about 30 x 40 feet including the porch.



Site Photo of 1940s Addition (left) and Collapsing Adobe Buildings (right)

Structural Assessment

The structural assessment was focused on the adobe building (including all additions) and smoke house. The building overall is in poor condition, with each segment in varying degrees of collapse. The 1940s two-story building and other nearby outbuildings are outside of the current scope, and not discussed herein.

Adobe Building

Fencing has been erected around the adobe building to restrict access as the site represents a significant safety hazard in its current condition.



Fence Restricting Access at Adobe Wing (left) of the Building

The roof over the adobe building has completely collapsed. At the south end only a few ceiling joists remain. At the north end the collapse appears to have been more recent and so much of the wood framing still exists on site and complicates access inside the two northern most rooms. In both cases the walls are free-standing from a structural perspective, which has further compromised their stability and in particular their performance in any future seismic event.



Remnants of Ceiling Framing at South End of Adobe (left) and Collapsed Roof at North End (right)

About fifty percent of the adobe walls have collapsed and are no longer standing. Where wall segments do remain, there are still localized missing areas, and many of the individual adobe blocks are no longer distinguishable as they have started to disintegrate (or 'melt') back into sand and clay. The deterioration of the adobe is due to prolonged exposure to the elements, and in particular water without protection from a roof.



Disintegration of Adobe at Original 1850s Structure

The adobe bricks in the later additions do appear to have kept a bit more of their shape. While the walls overall are not in better condition there are portions where you can still make out the joints and individual units. Where the adobe is exposed at the original structure the walls typically appear more as piled dirt without much definition of the individual blocks that once made up the wall.



Adobe Blocks at One of the Later Additions

At some point in recent years the walls that did remain were covered with a metal lath and Portland cement-based parge coat. While the intent may have been to mimic an historic whitewashed plaster appearance it was an inappropriate repair which has significantly accelerated the deterioration of the walls. The tops of the walls are typically open and with the parge coat in place it limits how much the adobe can dry out and 'breathe'. This increased exposure to moisture and freeze-thaw cycling started to tear apart the wall. As the parge coat is a much stronger material the adobe is the weak link that starts to deteriorate. This damage is evident at a few locations where the parge coat remains but the wall behind it is completely gone. Even some of the wall segments that appear to be in fair condition are

really just the parge coat hiding the true condition of the adobe. When the parge is removed the adobe is likely to start to crumble.



Parge Coat & Metal Lath Over Adobe

At portions of the adobe wall a past retrofit replaced the lower foot or so of the wall with concrete. Rising damp is when the adobe starts to wick up moisture from the soil, which can lead to accelerated deterioration at the base of the wall. This is likely why some portions of the lower wall were 'underpinned' in this manner as part of an earlier structural intervention.



Underpinning Replacing Lower Portion of Adobe Wall

The chimney is one area where the structure is in slightly better condition. The chimney sits in the space between the two rooms of the original adobe and has a hearth in each room. There is brick masonry incorporated into the chimney, which could be original as its not uncommon to see fired brick incorporated into adobe where higher strength was needed. While the adobe itself has still experienced significant deterioration the fireplace and chimney have largely kept their shape and only small areas are completely missing. The chimney has a bit more inherent stability than the free-standing walls just given the larger width, but without a roof to provide bracing is still extremely vulnerable to seismic forces.



North side of Chimney at Original Adobe

Smokehouse

The 1850s original smokehouse is in by far the best condition of any of the other adobes on the site. All four walls are also still intact with varying degrees of missing blocks, cracking and deterioration. The roof structure is still largely in place which has certainly helped the condition of the adobe. The roof itself, which is a combination of sheet metal over wood framing is in fair to poor condition and likely to fail without structural intervention in the next couple of years.



Structural Recommendations

The original adobe and the later additions to the north and south are all in poor condition. Only about 50% of the adobe walls remain, and even where it is still standing the historic fabric is so badly deteriorated that it would need to be replaced with new adobe blocks. Below is a description of a few different options for the adobe moving forward:

Stabilize as a Ruin

There are some localized areas such as the chimney and a couple wall segments that could be stabilized in-situ as ruins with significant structural reinforcement and bracing. This would

involve removing the roof and taking the loose material and rest of the walls down to mitigate the life safety risk.

Archaeology Site

As an alternate to stabilizing localized wall segments all (or some) of the walls could be taken down to the foundation stones. The base of the walls could be left and protected to show the historic footprint of the Reyes Adobe. In both the ruin and archaeology approaches there would be the option of adding in a new roof/shed structure above to help protect the remaining adobe from the elements – however, those funds might be better spent on the preservation of the original material rather than a new secondary structure.

Restore Building

The walls and roof could be reconstructed in kind using modern adobes. In this option a vast majority of the historic building material would be lost, although the goal would be to salvage and keep as much as possible. In a reconstruction one would want to replicate the past appearance, which could prove difficult given how little prior documentation has been uncovered to date – and so much has been lost given its current condition. This option could involve exterior access only or interior access and use. The rebuilt walls would be completed per the California Historic Building Code and would incorporate a concrete bond beam at the top.

Smokehouse

In any of the above options the Smokehouse is the one area where restoration appears the most feasible from a structural perspective. While there would still need to be significant repairs at both the masonry and roof it is presently still in a condition where it can be saved. In addition to repairs to restore the structural integrity of the walls and roof the building would be seismically retrofit with an interior bond beam and better connection to a roof diaphragm.

Please let us know should you have any questions or concerns with any of the observations or recommendations within this letter.

Sincerely,



Nathan Hicks, SE



Mel Green, SE