

Design, Access and Heritage Statement

The Old House, Cranham, Gloucestershire, GL4 8HP

Mr and Mrs Harwood

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Proposed Restoration To Original Features By:

- Removal Of Concrete Render To Reveal Original Cotswold Stone Underneath; and
- Repointing With Lime Mortar

Environs And Setting

Cranham, a rural parish with extensive woodland and scattered settlement, lies 9 km south-east of Gloucester and has in the 20th century become a residential area for people working in near-by towns. Outside the valleys the parish lies almost exclusively above the 152m contour on ground rising to over 274m at High Brotheridge in the eastern part and to over 259m at Saltridge hill in the south-western corner. Most of the high land is on the Inferior Oolite but in places there are deposits of fuller's earth and the Great Oolite. The valley bottoms lie on Midford Sand, from the base of which issue many springs, but in those of the Painswick stream and the Overtown brook Upper Lias clay is exposed.

Beech woods form the major feature of the landscape especially on the steep slopes in the north but the land on the high south-eastern plateau is suited to arable, and in the south-western part, an area of early enclosure, meadow land and pasture predominate.

Cranham church stands on a ridge south of the Painswick stream and its isolated position suggests that when it was built, probably as a chapel before the late 12th century, settlement in the area was dispersed and confined to clearings from the woodland. Cranham village, the main settlement, grew up by the stream 1 km. to the north-east on a road leading from the Calf way to meet the Portway route at the top of the escarpment. In the eastern part, The Old House, which has a doorway dated 1687 and 1727, is a late-17th-century gabled structure but most of the houses in the village date from C19.

Figure 1a Aerial view of Cranham parish



Figure 1b Site location plan

Please see separate attachment on planning portal.

Figure 1c Block plan

Please see separate attachment on planning portal.

Description Of The Property

Extract from the list description (list entry number 1091256):

Detached house. Dated 1687 and 1727. C20 rear wing. Random rubble with incised render (to the main range); ashlar chimneys; stone slate roof. Two-storey with attic. Rear wing is not of special interest.

Front: full off-centre gable, scattered fenestration. Off-centre doorway with chamfered opening and 2 dates on lintel; plank door and timber gabled porch hood. Two-light ground floor casements, 3-light to upper floor, 2-light in attic gable, all with hoodmoulds.

West end: off-centre casements to ground and upper floor, 2-light and 3-light; 3-light to attic, all recessed chamfered with hoodmoulds. Rebuilt chimney to east gable end.

Rear: blocked central doorway with deep stone lintel. Eaves-mounted chimney. Interior not inspected.

The rear wing, of 1940-41 date, is constructed of random rubble with ashlar dressings including mullioned windows with hoodmoulds to all but the windows under the eaves. The north and west elevations are roughcast rendered. The roof is of stone slate. One stack is rendered while the other is of brick.

While much of the front and east elevations of the main range are finished in a cementitious render, the west elevation of the main range in large part retains its early lime render. Many of the windows of the main range retain early C20 or earlier metal casements with plain leading, while the metal casements of the rear range date to the 1940-41 work. The gabled canopy over the front door seems to be of early C20 date.

Development Of The Property And Site

The main (front) range is the earlier part with late C17 and early C18 dates recorded above the doorway. It is a typical two room, two-and-a-half storey stone house of modest Cotswold vernacular form and construction. The large fireplace in the main room with winder staircase to one side is a typical arrangement for the period. The ceiling beam to the west of the front door indicates the location of a former partition between the two ground floor rooms, reduced to stub wings by 1939 and altogether by the later C20. We know that in addition to the three extant chimneys there was until the mid C20 a fourth probably Victorian chimney stack in the north-west corner of the main range serving a corner hearth on the ground floor, probably at that time a parlour. In the 1939 plan the opening opposite the front door, is a window however this is now restored to a doorway, likely the original arrangement creating a typical through-passage.

We know that the extant rear wing dates to 1940-41 and incorporates in part an earlier single storey masonry structure as well as replacing a single storey timber structure. In the OS plan of 1881 opposite the front range sits alongside another structure to the west. It also appears to show only the earlier masonry structure attached to the rear of the main range while the OS plan of 1901 clearly shows the timber structure in addition. By the time of the 1921 OS survey the building to the west had gone.

From records kept with the property we know that by the early part of the C20, the owners had acquired a modest amount of surrounding land and properties including the buildings to the east and the land to the north which ran down to the brook to the north.

A strip of land along the west boundary was sold off in 1964 for residential development while the properties to the east were sold off in 1987 and 1996. The house had become run down by the time of its sale in 2003 after which it underwent refurbishment.

Assessment of significance

Significance has been assessed in terms of the heritage values set out by English Heritage in their guidance document Conservation Principles:

- Evidential value [which] derives from the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity.
- Historical value [which] derives from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present. It tends to be illustrative or associative.
- Aesthetic value [which] derives from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place.
- Communal value [which] derives from the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory. Communal values are closely bound up with historical (particularly associative) and aesthetic values, but tend to have additional and specific aspects. (English Heritage 2008, 28-31)

The heritage values of The Old House, comprising the main range, later rear wing and surrounding land derive from its qualities as the earliest known extant domestic residence in the settlement.

The documented history of the site, known from old maps, purchase & building contracts left to us by previous owners, confirms a layered history created by continual occupation, adaption and change over three hundred and thirty years. Whilst losing some ancillary accretions during the C20, The Old House is still able to show changing domestic patterns of use over a 300 year period, reflecting the aspirations and economic fortunes of the occupants. The significance of the building has been recognised by statutory designation as a Grade II Listed Building, defined by English Heritage as particularly important buildings of special interest.

The significance of the site can be further defined in terms of its:

Evidential value derived from the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity

- The above- and below-ground archaeology of the site and the buildings on it provide known and potential evidence for its substance and evolution, and the people and circumstances that brought it into being.

- The location, scale and form of the building provides evidence for the physical and economic development of the area.
- The scale, materials, architectural quality and present form of the main range reflect its status and function providing evidence of social ambition.
- The documented adaptation and re-use of the site over three centuries provide a reflection of the changing economic conditions of the area.
- The evidential value of the site has been diminished by the loss of its earlier accretions however the main range retains the most significant and earliest evidence.

Historical value derived from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present, tends to be illustrative or associative

- The history of the site, insofar as it is known, provides a direct link to early modern past and illustrates themes in national, regional and local history, including the creation of wealth and the evolution of ownership of such sites. At one time (around 200 years ago, although the exact date is not known), The Old House used to be the village pub (the village pub is now approximately 200 yards away at The Black Horse).
- The building elements contribute to a multi-layered historic environment providing readily accessible evidence for the history and development of the site which can be appreciated spontaneously, without specialist knowledge.
- Historical value is derived from the relationship of the of buildings to their natural and man-made setting – the buildings elements have a direct functional relationship with each other and with the immediate setting.
- The buildings and in particular the main range provide evidence of the wealth, ambitions and expectations of a succession of owners of the site who adapted the use of this building to support elements of the local economy.
- The site has historical associations with local families showing the economic interests of said families/
- The historical value of the site and buildings has been diminished with the removal of earlier accretions but the mid C20 extension provides some historical value of its own.

Aesthetic value derived from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place

- The form and subsequent extension of the building has aesthetic value through their reflection of vernacular domestic design from the late C17 in its form, scale, materials and detailing.
- The setting of the building embodies aesthetic value through the direct relationship of the house within the streetscape and its relationship with the rural setting immediately beyond.
- The aesthetic value of the building has been damaged to an extent by modern materials, e.g. the concrete render that is desired to be removed and by modernisation of adjacent buildings.

Communal value derived from the meaning of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory

- The character of the buildings and their setting express aspects of regional and local identity.
- The main range in particular is visually accessible to the public.

Design And Access

The proposed works / design solution

The proposed works comprise:

- The removal of the concrete render to the walls arrowed in the figures 2, 3, 4 and 5 that follow, thereby revealing the original Cotswold stone underneath; and
- repointing those same walls with lime mortar following the removal of the render, as arrowed in the figures 2, 3, 4 and 5 that follow.

Figure 2 View of the property from the south-west



Remove render on the arrowed walls and return to original features of the Cotswold stone underneath. Repoint with lime mortar once render removed. The render is preventing the Cotswold stone from breathing and causing damp inside the property.

Figure 3 View of the property from the south-east



Remove render on the arrowed walls and return to original features of the Cotswold stone underneath. Repoint with lime mortar once render removed. The render is preventing the Cotswold stone from breathing and causing damp inside the property.

Figure 4 View of the property from the north-west



Remove render on the arrowed walls and return to original features of the Cotswold stone underneath. Repoint with lime mortar once render removed. The render is preventing the Cotswold stone from breathing and causing damp inside the property.

Figure 5 View of the property from the north



Remove render on the arrowed walls and return to original features of the Cotswold stone underneath. Repoint with lime mortar once render removed. The render is preventing the Cotswold stone from breathing and causing damp inside the property.

Assessing the existing position

The concrete render is unsympathetic to the original features and character of the property.

It is preventing the Cotswold Stone underneath from breathing, leading to damp issues (some significant in places) inside the property.

The render is in poor contrast to the two non-rendered walls which can be seen in figure 4 which show traditional Cotswold stone.

The render has been applied at different times and has the look and feel of 'patch up jobs' in places.

Access improvements

The proposed works provide no opportunity to improve access.

Expert

The proposed work would be carried out by Andy Peer:

