

Dewlands Farm , Sandpits Lane, Higham, CO7 6NG

Proposed Extension and Alterations to the Existing House

Design and Access with Historic Statement



Background

Dewlands Farm comprises a Listed Farmhouse, together with a range of timber framed barns and outbuildings located on 225 acres of farm and woodland within the Dedham Vale AONB.

Historic Archive Research was carried out by Anthony Breen in January 2016, a copy of which is appended to this report.

This research identifies Dewland's Farm as an example of a Suffolk farm retaining the name of its medieval owners, whose presence in Higham can be traced back as early as 1245.

The family not only survived the Black Death (1348-49) but prospered to consolidate their landholding until the family eventually disappeared from the documentary sources shortly after 1496.

Various sixteenth century leases of the farm indicate that the house was built sometime between 1538 and 1542.

This date also correlates with the earliest remaining barn on the site which retains heavy curved arched bracing, jewelled wall posts and arrangement of heavier "flat" studs, typical features of a C16th timber frame.

From 1542 onwards the farm was held by tenants on a series of short leases for periods of about 21 years.

The draft lease of 1721 between George Yale of North Waltham, Southamptonshire (now Hampshire) and George Death of 'Dulands' is significant as it qualified the

description of the house with the phrase 'to the vallow of as much roome as he had before the house was burnt', indicating that the house was damaged by fire just prior to 1721.

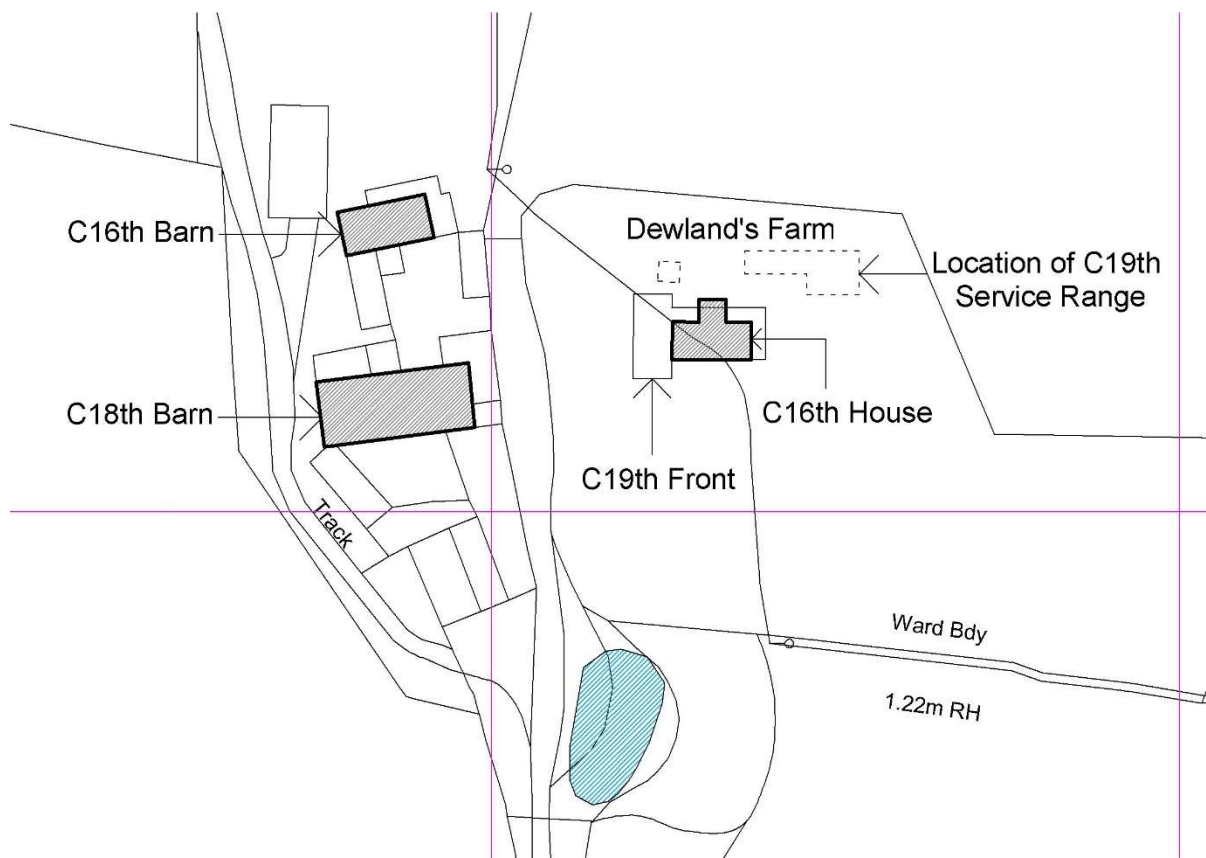
Inspection of the rear roof space of the existing house shows signs of blackened and marked timbers, indicative of a fire.

Detailing such as the moulded first floor joists and ovolu beams within the earlier parts of the house are representative of an C18th phase of work, which may have related to works of reconstruction following this fire.

In addition, the C18th barn within the farm range has been significantly built from reclaimed C16th timbers, possibly taken from the house at that time.

Both the First addition 1801 OS Map and the Tithe Map of 1838 show Dewlands with its earlier, reduced footprint prior to addition of the front entrance range

Both maps also show the C16th and C18th barns present at that time, though some damage to the 1838 map obscures the full footprint of the C16th barn.



Overlay of Buildings at Dewlands Farm as Shown on the 1838 Tithe Map

By the time of the 1884 OS Map, the footprint of the farmhouse has developed to closely resemble the layout that currently exists.

This indicates a mid C19th date for the addition of the front entrance range.

The interior and detailing of the front range is indicative of this mid C19th date and is supported by changes in the occupancy and improved status of the farm.

The 1841 census lists Dewlands as occupied by Agricultural Labourers only, however by the census of 1851 Dewlands is listed as tenanted with substantive acreage.

This phase of modernisation is also reflected in the farm buildings with lower ranges of Victorian brick buildings connecting the barns and timber framed granary to the south. A similar service range existed to the north east of the farmhouse

The current farmhouse retains the principle form of the mid C19th building, however it has undergone considerable minor alterations during the C20th.

These include the 2004 alterations approved under planning consent B/04/00007 and related listed consent B/04/00008.

Proposed Works

Proposals are for a modest sized extension to the north elevation of the existing house to accommodate a family room and better sized utility space (Scullery) on the ground floor with 2 bedrooms over.

Scale

The existing house has an eaves height of 5.5m to the Victorian range of and 4.3m to the earlier range to the rear.

The existing ridge height is between 7.8 and 8m, relative to ground levels.

It is proposed that the extension connects to the existing rear range with a lower ridge height of 6.8m. This link is also set back from the existing face of the C16th part, in particular the cross wing which presents as a gable on the North side.

The principal part of the extension would have a similar height to the existing building.

The proposed plan width is 5.4m which retains a traditional depth of building to the proposed extension.

These roof heights and plan depth are therefore commensurate with the scale of the existing house with the lower link providing visual separation to the extension.

Layout

The Victorian Phase of the house created a new entrance and reception range changing the principal access and orientation from the south to the west.

The changes would have elevated the status of the farmhouse and reflects the shift in tenancy that is highlighted in the 1851 census.

At that time, other outbuildings still existed to the north/north east which would have provided the service space for a farmhouse of this type and size.

Alterations in the C20th removed this range and included the addition of a lean to on the east elevation, providing space for a modern utility and service space.

The proposal is to replace the C20th east facing lean to with the proposed extension.

This retains the existing earlier phases of the house, without alteration, and provides a larger utility room (scullery) and family sitting room at the back of the house.

There are 2 ensuite bedrooms over, with narrow rear stair upto these rooms. These rooms have part sloping ceilings to provide a low eaves height relative to the adjacent original part of the house.

Amount

The existing house has an existing ground floor area (GIA) of 350sqm.

The proposed additional floor area (GIA) is 135sqm which represents a 38% addition to the existing house.

Appearance

The proposed works are designed in a traditional scale and materials to reflect the historic character and setting of Dewlands within the AONB.

Facades are to be constructed in soft red brickwork (Flemish bond) which differentiate the addition from the earlier principal phases of development (original and Victorian range) and replaces the modern C20th lean to.

The roof is to be finished in plain clay tiles to ensure that the building sits discretely within the landscape.

Access

Access to the existing drive/hardstanding remains unaltered by the proposals.

Consequently there is no requirement for extensive additional hard surfaces around the house.

Summary

Whilst the house has undergone significant alterations in the C20th, it retains the distinctive earlier phases of development: the original C16th part (altered in the C18th) and the mid C19th entrance front.

The proposals aim to provide additional family and utility space through a new range to the east in a form and scale that respects these earlier parts.