



FAO Planning Department
Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils
Endeavour House
8 Russell Road
Ipswich IP1 2BX

21st June, 2022

Dear Sir/Madam

Heritage Impact Assessment

RE: Proposed removal of existing render at the south western and partial north western elevation of the Old Vicarage, Little Waldingfield, in conjunction with timber frame repairs (as necessary) and re-render.

Introduction – A.D. Heritage Services has been commissioned to undertake this Heritage Impact Assessment on behalf of the homeowner. The document addresses proposals for the removal of existing concrete render from the south western and north western, possible timber frame repairs, and subsequent re-rendering of these elevations with an appropriate lime render. The document sets out the historic evolution of both the site and wider locale, before identifying relevant heritage assets and discussing the potential for their significance to be affected by the proposals.

In accordance with paragraph 194 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2021) this Heritage Impact Assessment describes the significance of those heritage asset(s) with the potential to be affected in a manner proportionate to both the assets' importance and an understanding of the potential for impacts upon that significance. A number of published guidelines were adhered to, including:

- 1) Methodology – Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets. Historic England Advice Note 12. Historic England, 2019;
- 2) The Setting of Heritage Assets Historic England Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition). Historic England, December 2017; and,

3) Conservation Principles for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment. Consultation Draft. Historic England, November 2017.

Site – The Old Vicarage (the application site, Figure 1), forms a component part of development located along the northern extents of the High Street, Little Waldingfield. It was designated Grade II on 9th February 1978, with the list description being summarised as follows:

A C17-C18 timber-framed and plastered house built on an L shaped plan. Renovated in the C20. 2 storeys. Casement windows. Roof thatched, with an old brick stack on the south-east side.

The application site is also located within the setting of a number of other scheduled designated heritage assets along this route and within the Little Waldingfield Conservation Area. Initially designated in 1973, the *Little Waldingfield Conservation Area Appraisal* notes that the special interest of this conservation area can be derived from a number of factors including building materials. More specifically, the appraisal sets out that:

'Timber-framed construction is there but not in an immediately obvious way, as there are no jettied first floors or exposed timbers. Brick or rendered fronts have hidden most of the clues and steep plaintiled roofs are all that remain visible.

Two rendered examples of timber-framed houses at the north end of the village look more authentically ancient with their thatched roofs and large brick chimneys'.



Figure 1: Application Site, south western elevation

Historic Background – Little Waldingfield is located approximately four miles north east of Sudbury and its name is considered to mean the ‘open area (field) of the dwellers by the wold (field)’. The village is mentioned in an Anglo Saxon will dating from 962-991 and is also referred to in the Domesday Book of 1086.

By the later Saxon period the dominant land use here was agriculture with surrounding fields being used for grazing sheep and growing wheat, barley and oat crops. From the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries Little Waldingfield played a part in Suffolk’s cloth industry, providing an outpost to the important centre of Lavenham. As a consequence, by the sixteenth century Little Waldingfield was one of the richest villages in the East of England.

As noted, the local economy was predominantly agrarian, however the land was exploited in other ways. More specifically, a Tithe map extract references fields that were named after specific ventures including Hop Grounds, Gravel Pits, Brick Kiln and Mill Field. Historically, a windmill was located to the south west of the main village near Hole Farm and a smithy was located in Church Road.

However, by the early eighteenth century the village had lost the wealth it experienced during the sixteenth century. Despite this, Little Waldingfield had a school, shop, two

pubs, a Methodist church and latterly reading room – this became the Parish Rooms by the nineteenth century.

Within such a context, the application site forms a component part of historic development that grew up along the High Street. More specifically, the Glebe Terrier (a schedule of land, property, tithes and offerings with which benefices are endowed) of 1613 describes the property as ‘a vicarage house, with one yard being halfe an acre’.

In a letter of 1679 Joseph Jackson notes that ‘as it is no Vicar can live in it’. Its apparent decline from the 1613 Glebe Terrier may be attributable to the Civil War and Commonwealth between 1642 and 1660. It is also of relevance to note that until the twentieth century the property is unlikely to have undergone significant expansion and/or change with N.R. Evans (1990) noting that ‘given the size of the house today, it would appear that it was not subsequently enlarged’ after the seventeenth century.

That this property was subject to limited change during this period is also possibly attributable to the village’s succession of vicars. Details of relevant vicars from 1552 to 1844 indicate that these were pluralists, meaning they had more than one dwelling.

Two further descriptions of the vicarage are provided within subsequent terriers. Within a Glebe Terrier of 1801 it is noted that ‘The Vicarage House and Yard containing three roods more or less, in the occupation of Joseph Day, which said Vicarage House is not better than a cottage, being of Clay and covered with Thatch’. This terrier also clarified that ‘a little piece of ground and a Dovehouse in John Strutt’s occupation abutting the Vicarage Yard, Subject to the Payment of one shilling yearly to the Vicar’. The next terrier, dated 1841, described the vicarage in a similar way.

Whilst a map regression exercise illustrates that The Old Vicarage was subject to limited alteration and change throughout the eighteenth, nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Figures 2 – 4), it is of relevance to note that a map extract from Historic England (2022) demonstrates that the property was extended during the twentieth century (Figure 5).



Figure 2: Little Waldingfield, 1885



Figure 3: Little Waldingfield, 1924

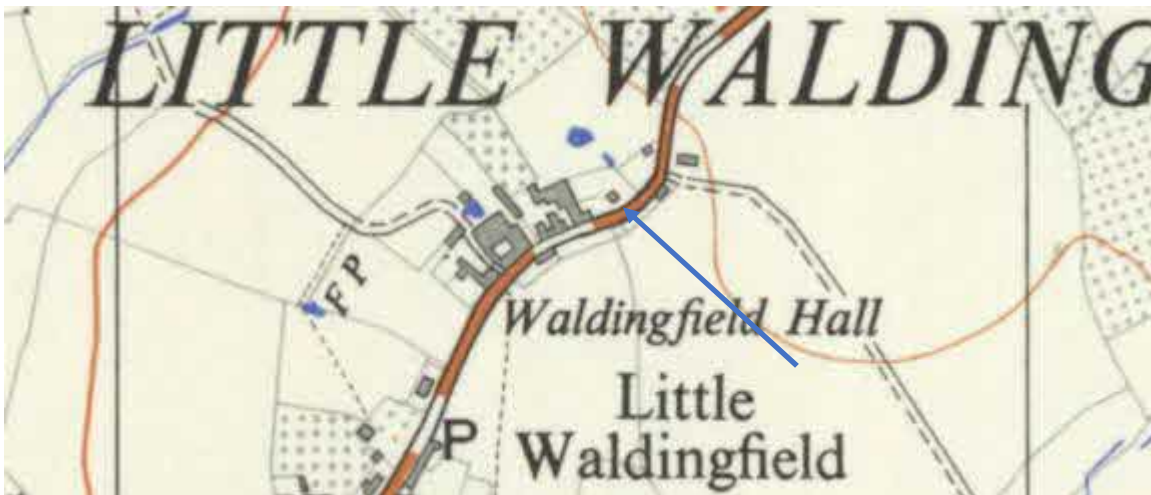


Figure 4: Little Waldingfield, 1955

Available planning history for the application site indicates the ultimate acceptability of works that are assumed to have been implemented to facilitate the better practical functioning for those occupiers at the time of consent. Applications of relevance include:

- B//02/01433 – Application for Listed Building Consent – Insertion of 1no. replacement door. Approved: 30th October 2002;
- B//02/01499 – Construction of new vehicular access and modifications to existing access. Approved: 16th October 2002; and
- B//98/01164 – Application for Listed Building Consent – Installation of extractor fan vent, blocking up of rear door and internal alterations. Approved: 9th November 1998.



Figure 5: Little Waldingfield, 2022

It is therefore demonstrable that the application site has been subject to ongoing periods of internal and external alteration and change to facilitate the needs of previous and current users. Whilst this is understood to have diluted inherent interest, works were nevertheless undertaken to ensure the long-term occupation and therefore conservation of its significance.

Proposals – Proposals for which consent is sought comprise the removal of existing, non-original concrete render across the south western elevation (Figure 6) and partially across the north western elevation (Figure 7). Here it is of relevance to note that existing render exhibits instances of degradation and is currently failing, in turn potentially compromising the timber structure beneath. As such, it is proposed to remove the render by hand to limit any potential harm to the existing timber frame.



Figure 6: South Western Elevation



Figure 7: North Western Elevation

Following removal, the structural integrity of the historic timber frame will be assessed and repaired as necessary. Once the timber frame has been deemed structurally sound these elevations will be re-rendered with an historically and aesthetically appropriate lime render.

Finally, the scheme also seeks the removal of an incongruous cement verge between the chimney stack and south western elevation (Figure 8). Again, this will be removed by hand with all existing tiles retained and preserved. This will be replaced with lead flashing.



Figure 8: Concrete Verge to Chimney Stack and Extract

As a consequence of the proposed works the host structure will be preserved. Further, and as a direct consequence of necessary remedial works, the property's current contribution towards the wider designated locale would be both preserved and enhanced.

Access – The existing access arrangements would not be affected given the very minor nature of proposals.

Impact Assessment - As noted, the application site was designated Grade II on 9th February 1978, its significance is therefore considered medium. Given that the current render on the south western and north western elevations exhibit an ongoing trend toward degradation, in conjunction with the inappropriate previous use of concrete render, current impacts upon the significance of this heritage asset are considered negative.

However, following the removal of concrete render and its replacement with an historically and aesthetically appropriate lime render, in conjunction with timber frame repairs (where necessary), proposals are considered to engender the long-term preservation of the host structure. Impacts following implementation are therefore considered beneficial, albeit minor given the very limited nature of change.

Turning to relevant heritage assets within the immediate locale, these all have a medium significance by virtue of their Grade II or conservation area designations. Given the very limited nature of change being proposed current impacts upon the significance of these are considered neutral.

Again, given the minor nature of proposals in conjunction with a limited perceptible change, the scheme will more than amply preserve the contribution The Old Vicarage makes towards the significance of the setting of all statutory designated structures and wider character and appearance of the conservation area. As a consequence, impacts following implementation are also considered neutral.

Given the account set out above it is demonstrable that the re-rendering of relevant elevations in conjunction with timber frame repairs (again as necessary following removal of existing render) will secure the property's long-term conservation and continued contribution to the wider designated locale. The very minor nature of the scheme has therefore ensured both the preservation and enhancement of not merely the host structure, but also the character and appearance of the overarching conservation area.

Proposals are therefore considered to result in not only the effective preservation of the host structure but the contribution this makes towards the wider designated locale, in accordance with the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990 and relevant paragraphs within Chapter 16 of the NPPF.

I trust this is of some assistance, but should you require anything further or wish to discuss any matter in more detail, do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



Sarah Burdis BSc (Hons), MSc, MA
Director

