

Design Access Statement / Planning Statement / Heritage Impact Assessment

Project: Extensions and alterations to house, creation of a new
cart lodge with study above and external works

Site: 1 Bridges Cottages

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1. INTRODUCTION

This Statement accompanies a pre application enquiry for Listed Building consent and planning permission for extensions and alterations and the construction of a new cart lodge. As this is a proposal for alterations in the curtilage of a single dwelling, some aspects such as the social and economic context are of limited applicability.

Please note that there is an HAA written by Leigh Alston which accompanies this application.

2. Site analysis and Evaluation and description of proposals

1 and 2 Bridges Cottages represent the two halves of a former farmhouse that has been divided into separate dwellings at least since the 1960s and possibly from the latter part of the 19th century. At the time of the parish tithe survey in 1841 the farm was a tenanted arable holding of approximately 110 acres on the estate of the Earl of Ashburnham based at nearby Barking Hall, and is understood to have been acquired subsequently by the Shrubland Hall estate. It was known as Darmsden Farm as is marked as such on the 19th and early-20th century Ordnance Surveys which show a large barn and a complex of farm buildings immediately to the west. These outbuildings appear to have been demolished in the 1950s or 60s when the house was renamed Bridges Cottages after its previous occupants. The census of 1911 records an Ernest Bridges, a farm horseman, living next door to his younger twin siblings, William and Eliza – probably in the already sub-divided house. No. 2 Bridges Cottages is a complete early-16th century timber-framed house of 1.5 storeys containing a central hall flanked by a pair of service rooms on the right and a parlour to the left in the usual manner of its period. The majority of no. 1 occupies a large mid-17th century 2 storied extension projecting at right angles from the front of the parlour and consists of two rooms on each side of a central chimney. This new building was entered by a rare and ostensibly original single-storied porch opposite the chimney, and it is likely to have been designed as a ‘unit house’ for a semi-independent unit of the farming family. Complete unit houses of this kind are known elsewhere in East Anglia but are not common, and the property is accordingly of considerable historic interest. No. 1 also includes the ground-floor parlour of the early-16th century house, but not the chamber above, and a series of late-20th century single-storied sheds and garages to the rear. The 17th century structure contains an unusual combination of tall and flat-sectioned joists in the same ceiling, and originally faced north-east towards the church with a pair of dormer

windows above the porch. A major refurbishment in the 1980s saw a new porch and dormers added to the rear, along with the rebuilding of the original chimney and stair. The internal fixtures, fittings and partitions are chiefly of this date.

The listing description is as follows:

The house is listed at grade II with the following entry in Historic England's schedule, last revised in 1986 (no. 1231696):

1 & 2 Bridges Cottages, Barking Darmsden

Two houses, built as one in the 16th century, with major alterations of the 17th century and later. 3-cell cross-passage entrance plan. 1 storey with attics. Timber-framed and plastered; the front elevation with cable-pattern pargetting, and one end wall with exposed framing and plaster infill panels. Roman pantiled roof with gabled hip at right hand end and axial chimney of red brick; a 19th century gabled casement dormer. Various 19th and 20th century casements. 4-panelled 19th century entrance door and glazed 20th century porch.

3. Pre app advice

A pre application was entered into which was carried out by Maria Kitts of Place services. Further to the advice received, changes were implemented into the proposals which all address all concerns or comments made by Maria.

4. Design approach

The proposals aim to repair and replace the 20th Century additions, most of which are in poor condition. There is no harm being proposed to any historic fabric, indeed, an existing upvc window in the living room would be replaced with a suitably designed painted hardwood window.

The proposal is to convert the lower garage / workshop rooms into habitable spaces to be used as a living room and gym. Outer existing doors are proposed to be retained and used as shutters when the rooms are not in use.

The existing gym / utility and conservatory are in particularly poor condition with leaking roofs and rotting timbers. These must be replaced and the design proposes a new internal parapet wall to provide inner support and a new extension with a garden room

element with reflects the shape of the existing conservatory. Good quality materials are proposed to be used which are appropriate to the setting.



The existing utility room



The existing garage / workshop



The existing conservatory



Inside the existing conservatory leading up to the house
On the second floor the applicants seek to make alterations to create a master bedroom with an ensuite and dressing room. The internal walls being proposed to be removed are all modern and have no heritage value (probably part of the 1970s work). No harm would be caused.

In addition, the existing front door faces the road in a 1970s porch of poor construction and it is difficult to find for visitors. The existing porch is proposed to be replaced with a new one which has the external door on the rear with a new path across the lawn leading from a guest parking area at the top of the drive (see proposed block plan). A new timber partition is proposed in the dining room to create a new utility room, This could be considered to be something that could be removed in the future leaving no harm or damage to historic fabric.

The proposed cart lodge is to serve more than one purpose. Currently the garage / workshop is used to store garden equipment which would be moved to the cart lodge when those buildings are converted. It would also be used as a garage and there is a workshop in one bay on the ground floor. With working from home, the applicants need a clean space which would be the first floor of the building. Regarding materials, we propose red clay pan tiles with capped bargeboards and untreated timber weather boarding walls and timber joinery.

5. SCALE

The extensions are of modest scale in keeping with the house. The proposed cart lodge is 1 ½ stories to reduce impact but due to the local topography, it is located at the bottom of a valley further reducing the visual impact. In addition new tree planting is proposed to further reduce any impact.

6. LANDSCAPING

The proposals include improvements to the access with new fencing, gates and parking spaces near the road, new tree planting areas and a new terrace outside the lower garden room / living room / gym.

7. CONCLUSION

In Leigh Alston's report, he clearly identifies the importance of the house. His focus is of course on the 16th & 17th Century elements which are steeped in history. However, when he gets to the 20th Century alterations, his views are summed up as 'These sheds include a timber conservatory and are of no historic significance'.

These proposals provide improvements to the house at the same time as replacing poor quality elements.