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HERITAGE STATEMENT

Householder & Listed Building Consent for proposed annex alterations to
Sicklesmere House, Little Whelnetham Road, Sicklesmere,
Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP30 0BX

1. HISTORIC SURVEY REPORT;

Sicklesmere House is a complex building of several phases. The original range, now re-fronted by a gault brick wall, is listed as late C18th, though this is probably a conservative date and Sicklesmere House may be mid to early C18th. It was originally a double fronted house of two storeys and attic with an imposing entrance hall. To the rear is a staircase wing rising to the attic. The stair wing is original.

By 1835 the original C18th range had been substantially extended by five separate elements. The first extension was a rear range at right angles to the original range and adjacent to the stair wing. This new build was constructed to form a full height rear wing to the main range with a similar ridge height as the existing C18th range. It is one room deep.

Further to rear of this extension and built-in line is another two-storey extension with a roof ridge height at eaves level to the existing building. Also at the rear is a third two-storey range adjacent to the SE elevation of the stairwell, again rising to eaves level of the original building.

Finally, before 1835, two small single storey hipped extensions were added to the end elevations of the C18th range.

The first extension is c.1800. All the later extensions prior to 1835 are almost certainly associated with the appointment of Henry George Phillips as Rector in 1816. He had a large income of nearly a £1000, which would have allowed him to live the life of a country gentleman and with the means to acquire the additional accommodation such a life style would have required.

In addition to the C19th extensions a number of mid to late C20th extensions were added:

- A flat roof single story room sandwiched between the stair wing and C19th extensions.
- A small single storey extension on the SE elevation.
- A conservatory type building on the NW elevation.

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2. EXISTING;

Sicklesmere House is a C18th Grade II timber framed house with several C19th and C20th additions.

Sicklesmere House is the old rectory of Sicklesmere parish and stands in its own substantial grounds of 9 acres. The parish is predominantly rural in character and is surrounded by agricultural land.

Sicklesmere House is surrounded by mature gardens, a pond, meadows and paddocks. There are several historic equestrian outbuildings and an ice house. The property has no near neighbours.

Inserted into the extension dated between 1816 and 1835 is a small room of uncertain age. On the evidence of the limited investigation is thought to be late C19th. It is constructed of rough studs of about 75 x 50mm with lath and plaster cladding. The sole plate is certainly reclaimed timber and it is possible that the studs may be revealed as reclaimed on further investigation. Its original use is unknown but given its position in what was then clearly the service end of the dwelling and the size of the inserted space, it is very likely to have been a pantry. The 'pantry' was built against an outside wall and this section of wall has been demolished to increase the floor area of the later C20th extension. The 'pantry' area is now only accessible from the C20th flat roof extension.

The proposed works are all intended to the existing annex structure, which is of later construction than the house. There is an original flint garage structure to the side of the proposed area, fronting the main driveway, but this is unaffected in these works.

3. DEMOLITION;

The proposed works will see the mainly internal alterations to allow for the clients' elderly parents to live in the structure.

The existing shower room will be enlarged to allow for a disabled access bath, and space for a wheelchair to turn within the room. This wall is internal stud partition and not heritage structure.

The existing kitchen will be relocated into a current bedroom, in order to minimise fire risk and keep demolition to a minimum.

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A small section of wall will be removed to allow for new access into the current garage structure adjacent, which is proposed to be converted into an additional larger bedroom which can allow a wheelchair to pass on all sides of the bed. This section of wall, although originally external, does not propose any particular heritage value, as it is of red brick construction and not flint etc.

The roof will see 4 small sections removed to allow for Velux heritage style roof lights to be installed. This will help maximise the natural light into the structure, which is minimal currently due to the singular aspect, whilst keeping demolition to a minimum.

Finally, the existing front facing uPVC windows will be removed and openings altered in order to better serve the three rooms they face. Currently the windows spread across the internal rooms, leading to awkward walls into windows. These windows are also at the end of their life, and are leaking heat and letting water in, so need to be replaced with new. The wall which they are located in is newer red brick in stretcher bond, highlighting it's new construction compared to the Flemish bond and flint elsewhere. Thus highlighting it as not a heritage wall to be retained.

4. JUSTIFICATION;

As stated in the previous point, the proposed works will allow for the space to be better used by elderly parents, providing DDA access spaces.

The amount of demolition has been kept as minimal as possible, whilst trying to maximise accessibility and use of the footprint.

The existing windows are failing, as per the last point, and so need replacing. The moving of them has a minimal effect on structure, retains a very similar aesthetic externally, whilst working much better internally.

The existing adjacent garage area to be converted, is currently wasted space, open to the elements and decay. The conversion of this space to part of the annex will vastly improve the quality of the structure and upkeep.

The existing roof will also be upgraded internally with better insulation to improve the quality of accommodation within the area.

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5. ACCESS;

The site is easily accessible via a long driveway from Little Welnetham Road arriving at a gravelled parking area to the South and East of the property, extending to the North with a hardstanding area providing direct firm access to the entrance hall at the rear of the property and the application area annex on the other side.

No alterations are proposed to be made to the existing access or parking.