

MOOR HALL, Stoke by Clare, Suffolk CO10 8HJ

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

The Property - a brief history.

Moor Hall is timber frame construction with fully rendered facade built mid 16thC around a 4 barrel chimney. Exposed larger timbers show repurposed ships or mill origins. A georgian frontage and fenestration was applied about 1780. There was a dwelling on the site from medieval times. Its size and footprint is unknown.

The gardens were influenced and partially planted by Humphry Repton who married one of the Fitch daughters who lived at the house up to 1790. This would be when the property owned 4000 acres of sheep farming land as far as Clare and had private gardens of 25 acres southward to the Stour River. The A1092 was originally the private track of the Hall and its farm barns opposite until WW1 when it was adopted driving directly.

In 1860 the Cambridge to Sudbury railway carved through the centre of the gardens reducing the plot to 5.3 acres and creating development space in the second part of the garden toward the river where there are now two Edwardian dwellings.

About 1870 a Victorian staircase and the music room and two/three rear upper rooms were added with a lower pitched roof. This encased the southern flank of the house into an inner hallway and landing. The stairwell was lit by a roof light oculus and cupola.

In 1961 part of the south west side of the house was underpinned with a brick plinth and new sill plate atop that, 'concrete render was applied and a concrete tile roof. Internal plaster was stripped off two rooms, a concrete floor put into the drawing room and dining room and interior works on the fireplaces was undertaken with modern brick and sandy cement joints.

In 1991 the Dovecot barn was sold off. An indoor swimming pool was built to the east of the house. A large barn was attached to the main dwelling and a conservatory added to the rear south east elevation. At this time a large workshop shed was also placed along the North boundary behind the pool.

In 2004 the bathrooms were given a 'makeover' with granite basins, marble floors on ply and heavy ornate 'Heritage period' sanitaryware and baths were installed.

Project Philosophy

A laundry-list of tasks was prepared upon acquisition of the house. It listed all necessary tasks to bring the dwelling 'up to scratch' after 32 years of minimal maintenance. A 100 week project plan of works was prepared and an assessment made of the tasks that would be considered overdue maintenance versus those considered requiring Listed Building consent. The underlying philosophy was to 'Heal' the property, sympathetically refurbish the structure, infrastructure and fittings and to give a new lease of life to what had become a very 'sad and tired' dwelling. The laundry list was shared with the Senior Conservation Officer at West Suffolk DC in September 2021 and again a revised list in December 2022.

Summary Issues

Moor Hall was acquired in June 2021 in poor condition. The property had been poorly maintained. Gardens were amass with dead wood, overgrown with bramble and heavily clad with ivy. Rainwater drains were blocked. Sewer systems did not function. Windows and Doors were screwed up and painted shut. Sash weights absent. Shutters did not function. Multiple layers of thick gloss-painted doors had seized up or failed to close. The kitchen was filthy & unworkable. Electric circuits were 60 years old with perished wiring, faulty sockets,

circuits inappropriately extended and three phases cross wired. The hot water system was too small with a 30 y.o smoky oil boiler running under 50% efficiency. Bathrooms installed in 2004 looked glossy but showers and drains leaked into the building fabric. The swimming pool leaked through pipes below ground and the pool roof required stripping and replacement. The inefficient plant and equipment installed in 1991 was at end of life.. Summarising; the entire house required careful examination and sympathetic renewal to be made fit for purpose.

Constraints

Moor Hall is listed Grade II thus subject to scrutiny, falling within guidelines for an historic property. The availability of local tradespersons experienced in carpentry, plumbing, electrics, bricklaying, lime plastering, groundwork and gardening is limited by local demand. The budget for repairs and renewals and refurbishments was [REDACTED] 100 weeks later almost [REDACTED] has already been spent on top of acquisition costs..and this does not account for my own time for the past two years to manage this project.

Qualification

As the author of this report and latest owner of Moor Hall I believe I am well qualified to undertake these works from my experience and more recent education. For three years 2002 to 2005 [REDACTED]

This is the ninth listed building I have owned and lived in that I have refurbished. I have hands on experience with a range of building vernacular and all aspects of design, refurbishment and project management. My original professional background was as a Chartered Management Accountant (FCMA CGMA JDipMA).

Past listed building dwelling improvement projects include :-

Olde Granary, Elton, Peterborough PE8 6RA

Furnace House Farm, Four Elms, Edenbridge, Kent TN8 6PE

Higher Bowden, Dartmouth, Devon TQ6 0LH

Longbourne, Upton Pyne, Devon EX5 5JA

15 Brock Street, Bath BA1 2LW

Sion House, Sion Hill, Bath BA1 2UH

8 Church Street, Poole, Dorset BH15 1JP

Saltford Grange, Bath Road, Saltford, BS31 3AG

Moor Hall, Stoke by Clare, Suffolk CO10 8HJ

I have lived in and refurbished a number of other properties that were unlisted.

Space and Utility

Within this application there are no proposed increases or decreases in the floorspace of the premises. There are no additions, no demolitions, nor changes to space or usage.

Space Calculations

The existing and proposed internal measurements for the house, pool and workshops are:

Main House 662 sqm 7117 sq ft

Swimming Pool 244 sq m 2632 sq ft

Workshops 46 sq m 495 sq ft

Total 952 sq m 10,244 sq ft

External boundaries encompass 5.33 acres (2.16 hectares) of driveways, herbaceous gardens, lawns, woodland, formal Victorian bathing pond, streams and lakes.