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Mollands Hall

Earl Stonham

Stowmarket

IP14 5HP

(TM 09460 59618)



HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT



Mollands Hall (formerly The Cricketers), NW elevation

Jane Blanchflower

August 2016

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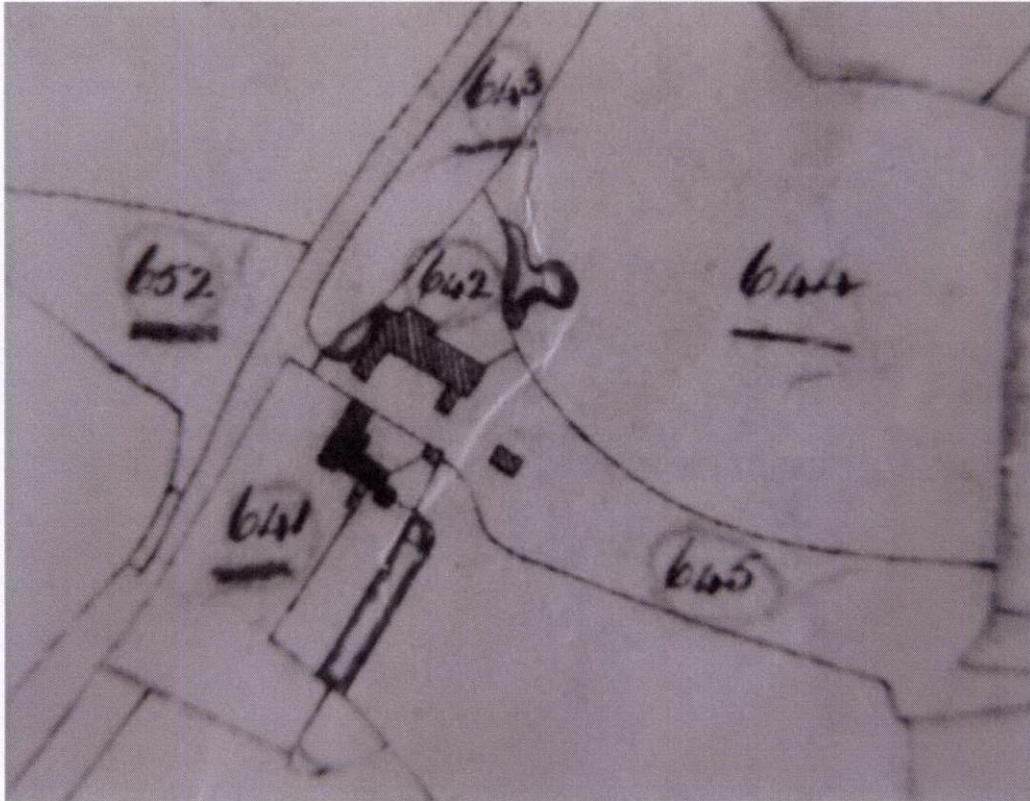
Introduction

The Historic Impact Assessment provides an assessment of the impact of proposed changes on the historic fabric and setting of Mollands Hall, a Grade II listed building (Historic England Building ID 279354) situated in Earl Stonham Parish in Babergh/Mid-Suffolk District. It is not within a Conservation Area. The report has been prepared to accompany a planning application/listed building consent for a proposed single-storey rear extension to the SE of the house, the insertion of two French doors on the recently built SW extension and, subject to previous listed building consent, the reduction of the length of the wall between the kitchen and cross passage at the N end of the house.

The core of the building dates from 1630 although there have been subsequent internal alterations and additions to the SW and SE (rear) elevations. Mollands Hall was built as a house for the Turner family, yeoman farmers in the parish, but it operated as a Public House and shop from the 19th century until the 1940s and was formerly known as The Cricketers. The building was listed Grade II in December 1955 by Historic England for its architectural and historic significance. A detailed Historical Survey of the building was carried out by Leigh Alston in May 2005 and the Impact Assessment takes this evidence into account. The site was visited on 3rd August 2016 and the photographs included in this report were taken on that date. The abbreviation SROI stands for Suffolk Record Office, Ipswich.

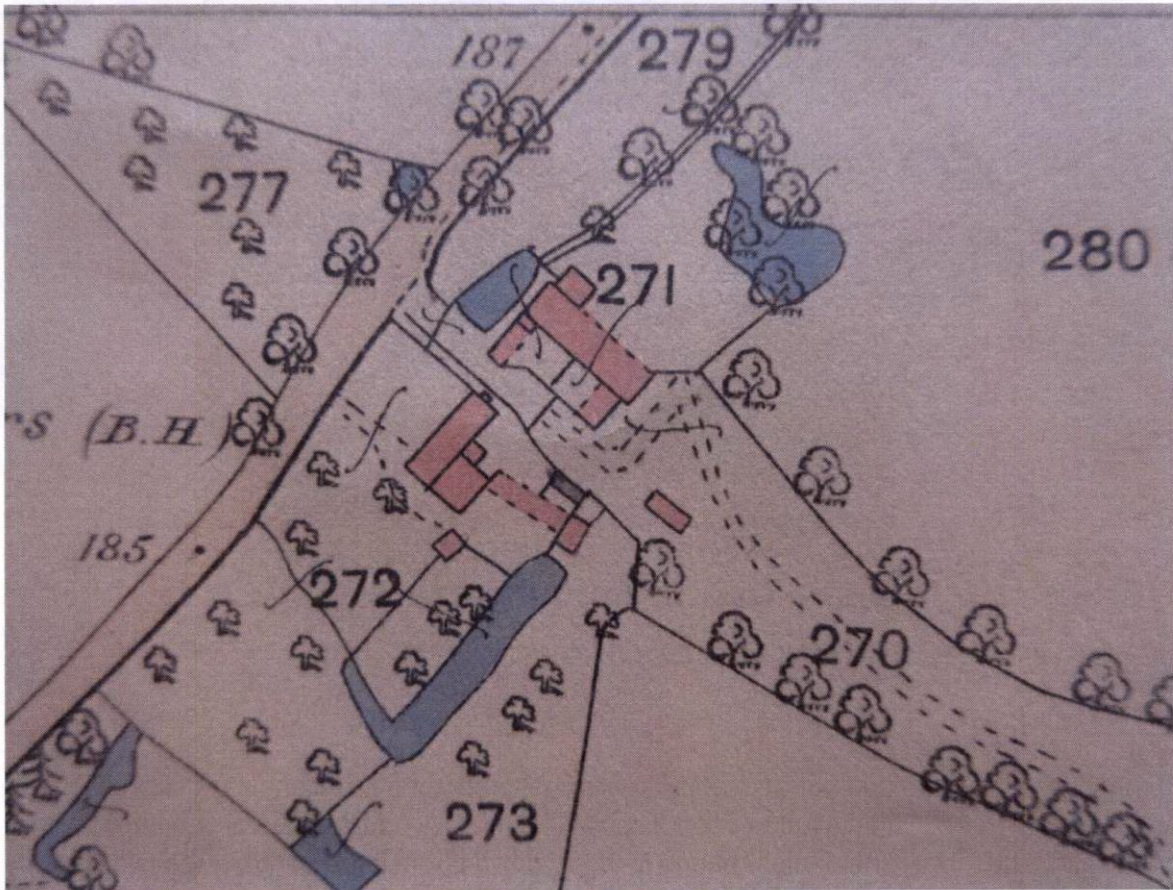
Site History

Leigh Alston's Historical Survey covers the documentary history of the Turner family who built and occupied Mollands Hall and its land until the 19th century when Joseph Welham acquired the land, the house and shop and large barn to the N which were let to Jonathan Ager. The following map regression, based on the map collection in the Suffolk Record Office, is intended to document changes to the building footprint during the 19th and 20th century.



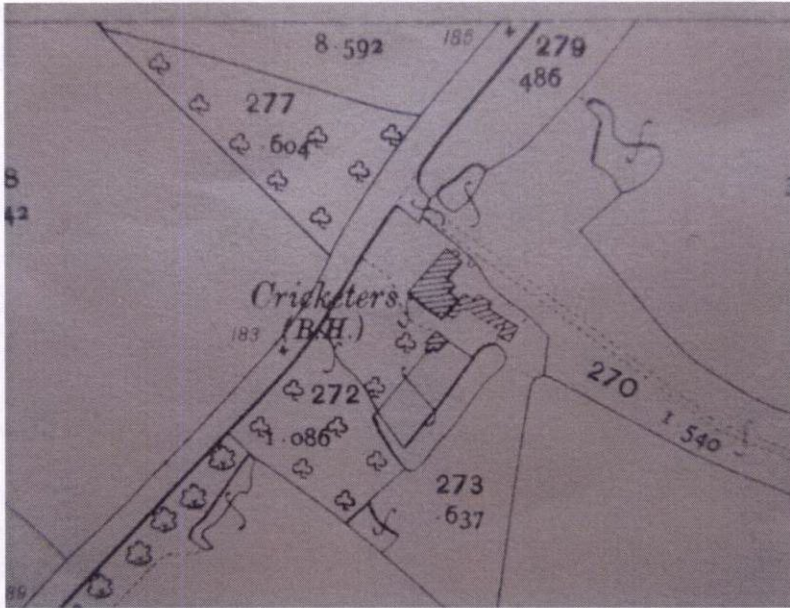
1838 Tithe Map (SROI P461/87), Mollands Hall in enclosure 641, large barn in enclosure 642, garden canal to SE of house

The 1838 Tithe Map shows Mollands Hall in enclosure 641, described in the Apportionment (SROI FDA 87/A1/1a) as 'House, Garden & Shop' owned by Joseph Welham and occupied by Jonathan Ager. The building footprint is recognisable excluding the small 21st century extension to the SW elevation of the main house and the small late 20th century extension to the SW elevation of the rear wing. Enclosure 642, to the NE of the house, is described as 'Barn & Premises', owned and occupied by Joseph Welham. Joseph Welham owned and occupied the surrounding enclosures including 652 Orchard, 644 Barn Meadow and 645 Drift (a lane). There are two ponds, both of which are still in existence, one immediately to the NW of the barn and the other to the NE of the barn. The canal, a garden feature to the SE of the house, is shown although this was filled in c.2005. There is a small building to the E of the house. The barn is substantial, reflecting the relative prosperity of the farmstead during the 17th and 18th centuries.



1885 1st edition OS, scale 25in : 1 mile (SROI 57/5)

The 1885 map shows a larger extension adjoining the SE wall of the parlour (at the SW end of the house) with a small addition (now a utility room) in the return angle of the extension. Adjoining the SE elevation of the extension is a rectangular, open sided building with a further small building attached to the SE end. The house has a small porch on the NE elevation. There is a separate entrance leading to the SW (shop end) of the house, giving access to the buildings at the rear. Access to the barn is via the drift between the barn and the house. The map shows the orchard on the NW of the road opposite the house and further plantings in the garden to the SW and SE of the house.



1904 2nd edition OS, scale 25in : 1 mile (SROI 57/5)

In 1904 the footprint of the house itself appears unaltered but the rectangular building attached to the rear extension has been extended at the NW end and it is only open fronted on the SW side. The other major change is the removal of the large barn but the two ponds remain. The house is named as The Cricketers Beer House, presumably because of its situation to the SW of the village cricket ground. This indicates that it is no longer directly associated with farming activities.



The Cricketers Inn c.1920 (photograph by kind permission of Mr & Mrs Carrington)

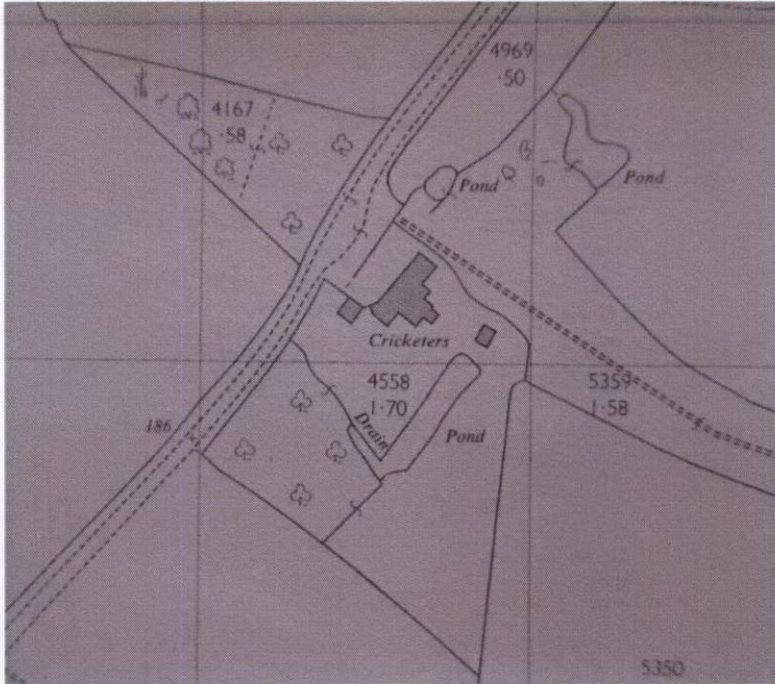
The early 20th century photograph shows the Cricketers Inn and the shop situated in the former parlour at the SW end. The existing door into the cross passage with the licensee's board above it is on the left of the photograph and on the right is the shop door which no

longer exists. Beneath the Inn sign is a blank area of wall which may have contained a lobby entrance in front of the axial stack (ref. p11 of Historical Survey).

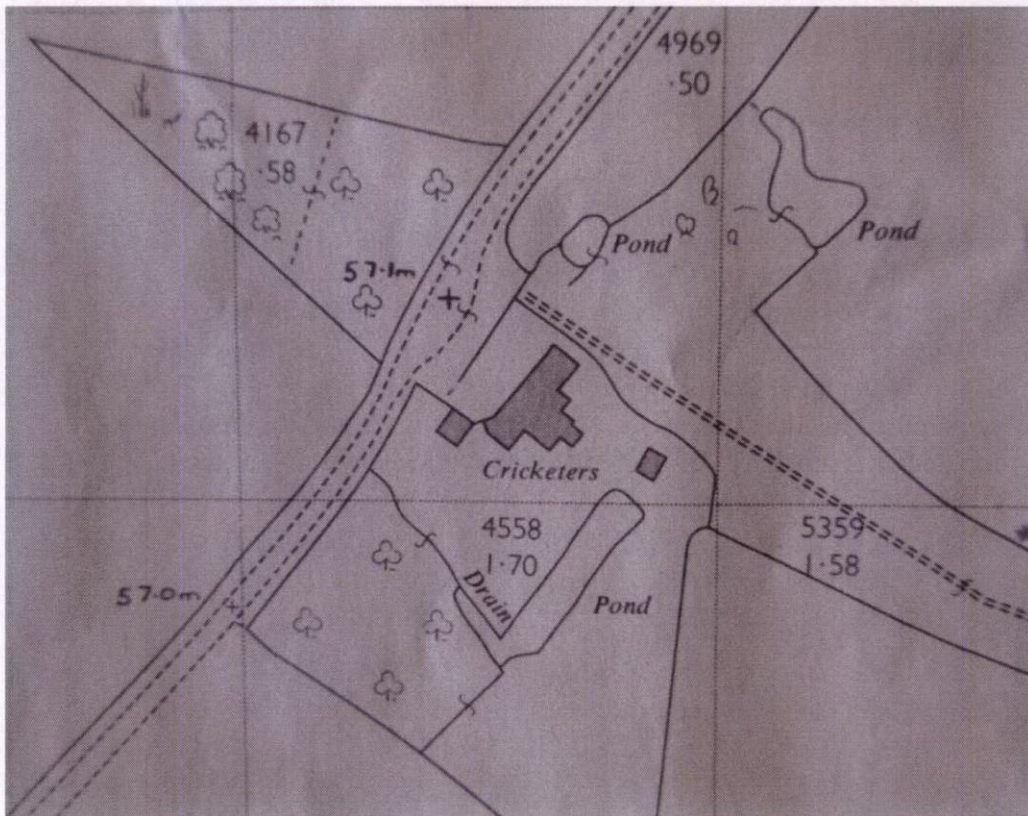


1964 Aerial photograph (by kind permission of Mr & Mrs Carrington)

The 1964 aerial photograph shows that a large garage had been constructed to the SW of the house with a wall linking it to the SW corner of the house. Behind the wall is a single storey extension on the SW elevation of the house. In front of the house is an open area of grass with the low white railings pictured in the 1920 photograph. The rear wing on the SE side of the house is visible and there is an area of formal garden to the S and E of the house. The open fronted building behind the house is not visible and the building footprint on the 1967 map confirms that it has been demolished. However, the small building at the far end of the open fronted shed remains.



1967 OS TM 0959, scale 1 : 2500 (SROI)



1969 OS TM 0959, scale 1 : 2500 (SROI)

There are no further changes shown on the 1969 OS map.

The Historical Report describes the original house of 1630, the mid 17th century refurbishment and chimney passageway (now blocked), and 19th century extensions adjoining the stair tower, based on documentary and extant fabric evidence. A single storey concrete block extension was added to the SE elevation of the service end of the house during the later 20th century (this does not appear on the 1969 map therefore was probably built during the 1970s). There was a small porch, also of concrete block and probably dating from the 1970s, attached to the NE elevation of the house, leading into the service end and to the secondary stair. The outline of these extensions is visible in the exterior render. The porch and extension were removed by the present owners c.2005 and a modern stair was replaced in its original position but turned round (ref. p4 of Historical Survey).

In the 1990s the house underwent extensive alterations including the replacement of many of the original timbers including the external tiebeam of the left gable of the principal NW elevation, in which was carved the initials 'TT' and the date 1630. A new porch was constructed on this elevation and the date 1630 has been recorded in the plasterwork.

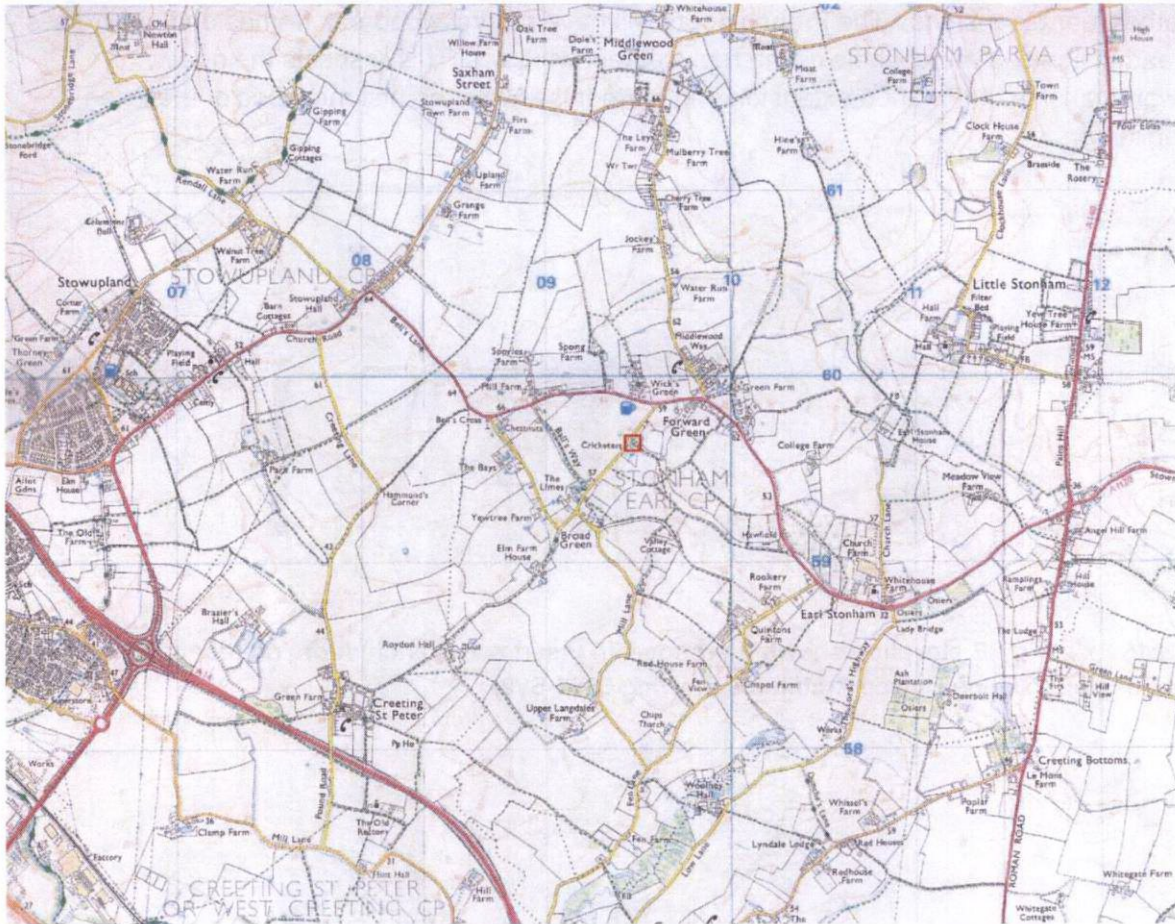
The present owners purchased the property in October 2004 and added a small, single storey, timber framed extension, linked to the SW elevation, and a ground floor corridor on the SW side of the stair tower for ease of access to the rooms in the rear wing. Mollands Barn, the one and a half storey building to the NE of the house, is in the same ownership and was converted into offices by the previous owners. The driveway to the house and barn has been re-routed so that it enters the grounds to the N of the smaller pond and site of the former barn. The lane frontage has been screened with willow fencing and plantings, the canal has been infilled and the garden has been re-designed and planted to complement the architectural significance of the house.



2005 Aerial photograph (by kind permission of Mr & Mrs Carrington) This shows Mollands Barn to the NE of the house, the garden shed (now demolished) to the SE, the garage, link wall and SW extension (all demolished)

Setting

Mollands Hall is situated centrally within Earl Stonham on the E side of a lane leading S from the A1120 at Forward Green via Broad Green to Needham Market. The property is set back from the road behind a hedge and willow fence with landscaped gardens to the NW, SW and SE. To the NE is the driveway to Mollands Hall and Barn, terminating in a surfaced parking area. There is a hedge and willow fence between the parking area and the rear garden of the Hall. The smaller pond is situated in an area of garden to the NW of the parking area, next to where the large barn stood. The grounds are essentially level with small departures where they have been terraced. Immediately opposite the house, on the W side of the lane is a wooded area, formerly orchard. Beyond the garden and grounds are arable fields in separate ownership. A public footpath formerly ran along the track (named as a Drift on 19th century maps) immediately N of Mollands Hall but this was diverted in the 1990s and now follows a farm track to the N of Mollands Hall grounds. The house and barn are barely visible from the lane owing to trees and hedges planted along the boundary during the past ten years.



2012 Explorer 211, scale 1 : 25000, red square indicates Mollands Hall

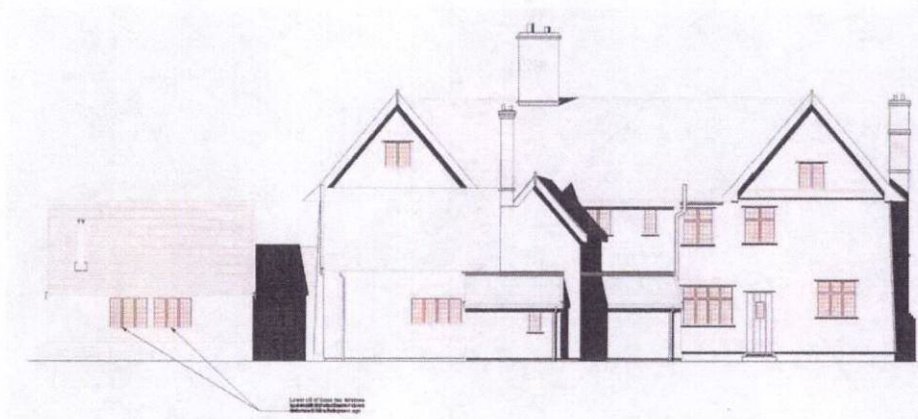
The Impact of the Proposals on the Listed Building & its Setting

1. The insertion of French windows into the SE elevation of the W extension

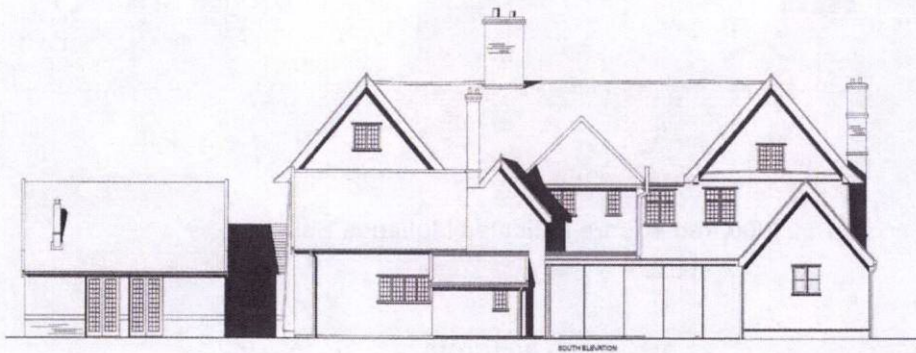
The single-storey W extension, which is linked to the SW elevation of the main house, was added by the present owners in 2006. The extension has a pegged timber frame constructed by local craftsman Rick Lewis, and a plain tiled roof matching that of the main house. The timber frame sits on a red brick plinth and the exterior walls are of colour washed render with a rectangular pargetted panel decoration. The two windows which would be removed are oak framed three-light casements with small, leaded square comes.

The owners would like to insert two French doors to replace the two windows in the SE elevation as indicated in the drawing. This would facilitate the use of the extension as a garden room with direct access to the garden and the paved terrace adjoining the terrace. The proposal will involve breaching the recently built modern brick plinth and oak window sill, sole plate and studs, all of which are part of the 21st century extension. There would be no loss of historic fabric and the area under consideration is not visible in the main NW elevation of the listed building. The windows are only visible in the rear SE elevation from the garden of the property and looking SW the extension is obscured by the stair tower and

other rear extensions. The French doors will have natural wood oak frames and clear glass leaded lights to match the existing replacement windows. This respects the quality of workmanship of the 2006 extension and harmonises with the historic fabric of the listed building.



2016 Existing SE elevation showing proposal to insert two French doors on recently built W extension (Mullins Dowse Architects drawing 5965-Sy2)



2017 Proposed SE elevation showing French doors, glazed link and single storey utility extension, scale 1 : 50 (Mullins Dowse Architects drawing 5965-03)



Left: windows in SE elevation of W extension to be replaced with French doors; Right: SE corner of extension showing brick plinth



Left: interior W extension looking SW; Right: detail of SE wall showing windows to be removed and replaced by French doors



Left: NW elevation of W extension; Right: looking N from S area of garden



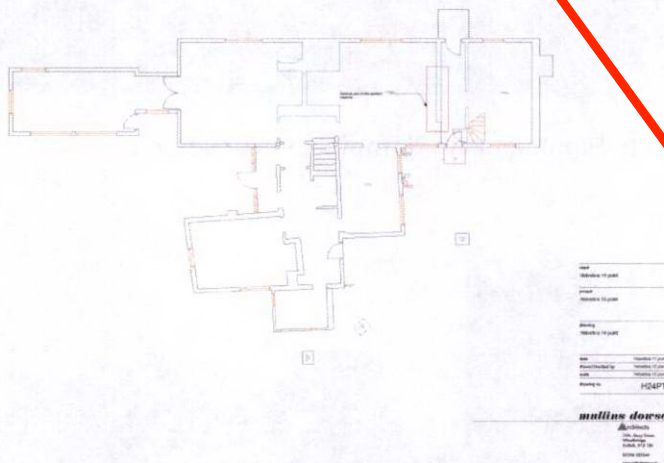
Left: looking NW, showing paved terrace to SE of extension and link corridor to main house; Right: looking NW from SE area of garden showing change in level

Section removed as works previously approved and implemented

2 Reduction of the length of the wall between the kitchen and cross passage

This part of the proposal already has listed building consent. The drawing H24PT shows the length of wall proposed for removal and drawing 5965-02 shows the proposed floor plan with the section of wall removed. The cross passage is situated towards the NE end of the house, with the kitchen to the SW and the 'snug' (formerly the two service rooms but now a single room) to the NE. The wall under consideration runs transversely across the main building on the SW side of the passage. The front and back doors are at opposing ends of the passage and in the 17th century there would have been a boarded or panelled screen where the existing masonry wall stands. Exploratory intervention has confirmed that the wall is constructed of brick with plastered exterior surfaces (information from the present owner). It is likely that this wall dates from the 19th or 20th century. There is a doorway at the SE end of the wall, giving access to the kitchen (formerly the 17th century hall).

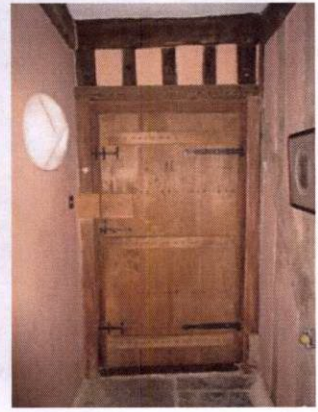
The wall presents as a prominent and solid feature in the kitchen whose NW and SE walls are timber framed with exposed close studding and the SW wall contains the fireplace. Its reduction in length would enable a greater appreciation of the NE wall of the cross passage with its doorways to the two service rooms, whilst the remaining section would retain evidence of the cross passage layout of the three cell 17th century house. The SW face of the ceiling joist has a single ovolo moulded chamfer, terminating in lamb's tongue stops. The removal of a length the wall below the joist should not result in damage to the joist, provided it is done carefully. There should be no loss of historic fabric.



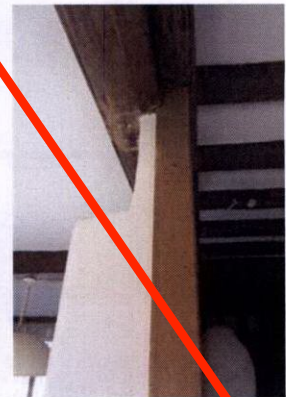
2016 Existing Floor Plan (Mullins Dowse Architects drawing 5965-Sy1) showing section of partition wall between kitchen and cross passage proposed for removal (in red box)



Left: ovolo moulded ceiling joist with lamb's tongue stop, supported by decorated bracket on principal post at NE corner of hall, looking into SE end of cross passage with secondary stair door opposite and rear door on right; Right: axial beam with ovolo moulding meeting joist on SW side of cross passage with plastered brick wall for reduction beneath



Left: NE wall of kitchen proposed for reduction; Centre: cross passage looking NW showing wall on left for reduction; Right: front door at NW end



Left & Centre: detail of NE kitchen wall; Right: profile of wall for reduction looking NW

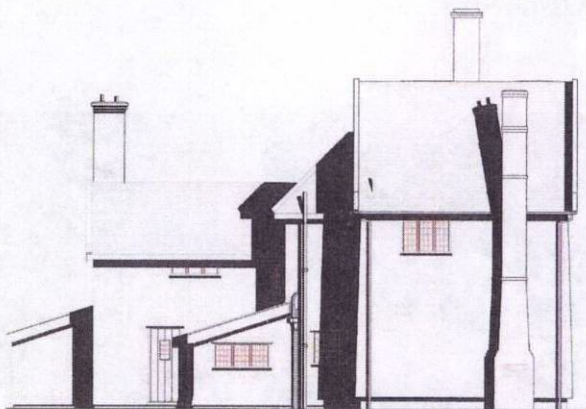
3. Proposed extension to the SE of the house Section to be superseded by current proposals

A single storey, pitched roof extension is proposed on the rear NE corner of the house on the site of a 1960s, two-storey concrete block extension which was removed by the present owners in 2006 (ref. Alston report page 11). ~~The ground floor plan (drawing 5965-02) and N elevation (drawing 5005-03) of the proposal shows that a glazed corridor with a vertically planked oak exterior door (NE) will link the extension to the rear SE elevation of the main house to avoid the need for any intervention or additional openings in the historic fabric of the SE wall of the house.~~ The existing rear SE door from the cross passage of the house will provide access into the link between the house and the extension.

The proposed N elevation shows that the link between the historic building and the new extension (utility/boot/shower rooms) provides a clear separation between new and existing elements with an unobtrusively sited door and no loss of historic fabric. The extension will have a pitched, clay pantile roof with painted timber fascia and barge boards.

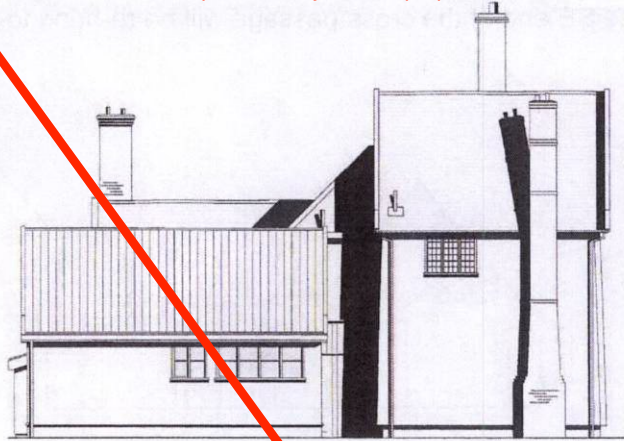


Left: SE (rear) elevation showing site of proposed extension; Right: imprint in render of roofline of 1960s extension (demolished in 2006) outlined in red on image



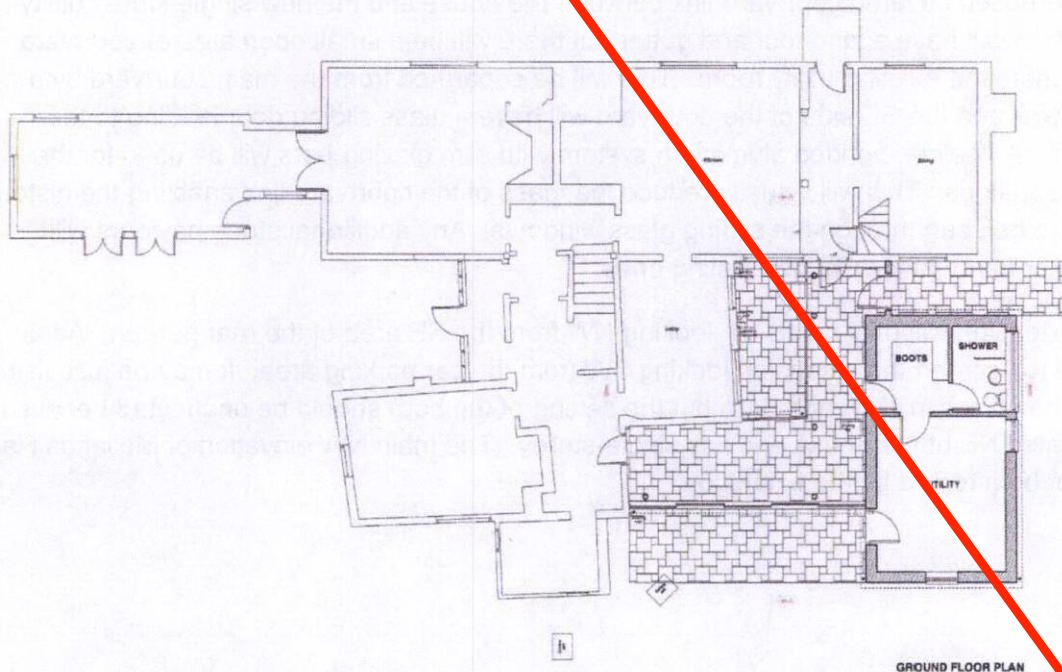
2016 Existing NE elevation showing site of proposed single storey extension to left of main house (Mullins Dowse Architects drawing 5965-Sy2)

Section to be superseded by current proposals



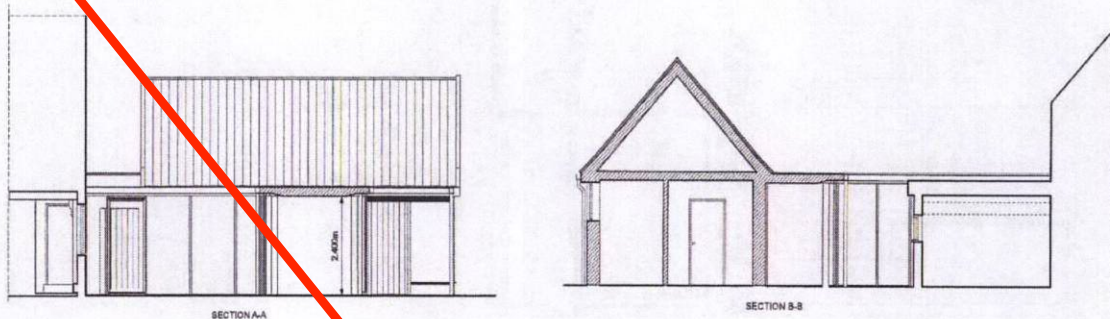
2017 Proposed NE elevation showing glazed link with door and single storey utility extension, scale 1 : 50 (Mullins Dowse Architects drawing 5965-03)

The windows in the NE & SE elevations of the utility extension will be timber framed with a single horizontal glazing bar. This style of fenestration and the use of pantiles is in contrast to the historic building, showing that it is an addition whilst the use of traditional materials and a colour washed, rendered finish respects the listed building.



2017 Proposed ground floor plan, scale 1 : 50 (Mullins Dowse Architects drawing 5965-02)

The floor plan shows that recessed, glazed link between the SE wall of the main house which will avoid intervention into the historic fabric and will retain the existing two windows (kitchen and snug) and the rear door at the SE end of the cross passage will be re-hung to open outwards.



2017 Section A-A (left) & Section B-B (right), scale 1 : 50 (Mullins Dowse Architects 5965-02)

The roof of the new link will terminate at the N wall of the existing utility room. Owing to the lower height of the eaves of the utility room (see Section B-B), the wall of the link will be built up off the N wall of the utility room with a lead parapet gutter behind. The utility room is attached to the stair tower and is a 20th century extension, therefore the historic fabric will not be affected.

The proposed covered courtyard link between the house and the new single storey utility extension will have a zinc roof and gutter but there will be a small open area of courtyard adjacent to the existing utility room. This will be separated from the main courtyard by a glass wall and the SE side of the courtyard will have a glass sliding door leading to the garden. A fineline, bonded aluminium system with slim glazing bars will be used for the glass partitions. This will visually reduce the mass of the courtyard link enabling the historic fabric to be seen through the sliding glass windows. Any additional stone pavours will match or harmonise with the existing ones.

The extension will only be visible looking NW from the SE area of the rear garden. A tall hedge will screen the extension looking SW from the car parking area. It may be just visible from the offices in Mollands Barn but the setting of the barn should be unaffected because it is situated NE of the house and it is single-storey. The main NW elevation of Mollands Hall will not be affected by the extension.



Left: looking SW from parking area towards site of proposed extension; Right: looking SE across parking area towards Mollands Barn, house on right separated by tall hedge

Summary of Impact on the Listed Building and its Setting

Mollands Hall is a significant example of a 17th century yeoman farmer's house which retains some important architectural features including a mid-17th century stair in its stair tower. These features are described in detail in Leigh Alston's Historical Survey which documents the various changes that the building has undergone since its construction in 1630. The building's Grade II listing is easily justified by the many surviving 17th century features together with documentary evidence relating to the house and its site. As such, the building and its setting are highly sensitive to proposed changes.

The proposals described in this report have avoided any direct intervention into the historic fabric and their effect on the setting will be minimal. The proposed SE utility extension is on the site of a previous 1960s extension and the use of traditional materials together with the existing hedge will minimise any visual impact. The glazed courtyard link respects the historic fabric without obscuring the 17th century plan form.

In principle, subject to the use of appropriate materials, the proposals would have minimal impact on the significance of the heritage asset in accordance with paragraphs 126 and 131 of NPPF Section 12.