

Heritage and Design and Access Statement:

To accompany a Listed Building Consent and Full planning application for the division of property back to form 2 No. Separate dwellings including erection of boundary screening and replacing rear window with purpose made French doors:

This statement is in support of the householder application and drawings submitted to Mid Suffolk District Council to modify the existing internal layout of Stead Cottage and separate it from The Homestead.

Overview of Rickinghall:

Stead Cottage and The Homestead are situated within the housing settlement boundary of the large combined villages of Rickinghall and Botesdale. The linked property is positioned directly on the main village street in a central location. The settlement is linear in style and consists of a large number of. There is a mix of detached mixed age dwellings, including many listed buildings and other more recent properties, semi-detached and terraced houses, including many older properties which have been sub-divided into two or more dwellings over the years. Further housing has been provided in a significant number of modern estates behind the main street. The villages are well serviced with a primary school, a health centre, a small supermarket, two pubs, a café, two take-aways and two hairdressers. There are regular bus services to Diss and Bury St Edmunds.

Heritage and Overview of The Homestead and Stead Cottage:

The Homestead is Grade II Listed under English Heritage Number UID 1241235 dated 29th July 1955. Stead Cottage is described within this listing as an attached C20 Surgery. The Homestead is a substantial village home dating back to the mid to late C17 with extensions and alterations in the C18, C19 and C20.

From 1926 it was occupied by Dr Ward, the village doctor who in 1939 acquired the neighbouring plot of land on which had stood a pair of cottages, which burnt down in the 1930's due to a firework landing in the thatch next door. The photograph below (c1930) shows the Homestead (with 3 dormer windows) and the pair of tiled roof cottages next door which were destroyed in the fire.

On the site of these cottages Dr Ward constructed a new purpose-built Surgery in the 1940's attached to his home. The Surgery continued to serve the village through the C20. Dr Bawden joined the practice in 1977 and recalls there being a waiting room for patients accessed off The Street, a reception area, three consulting rooms and a dispensary. He worked there until 1982 when the surgery was relocated into the new Botesdale Health Centre.

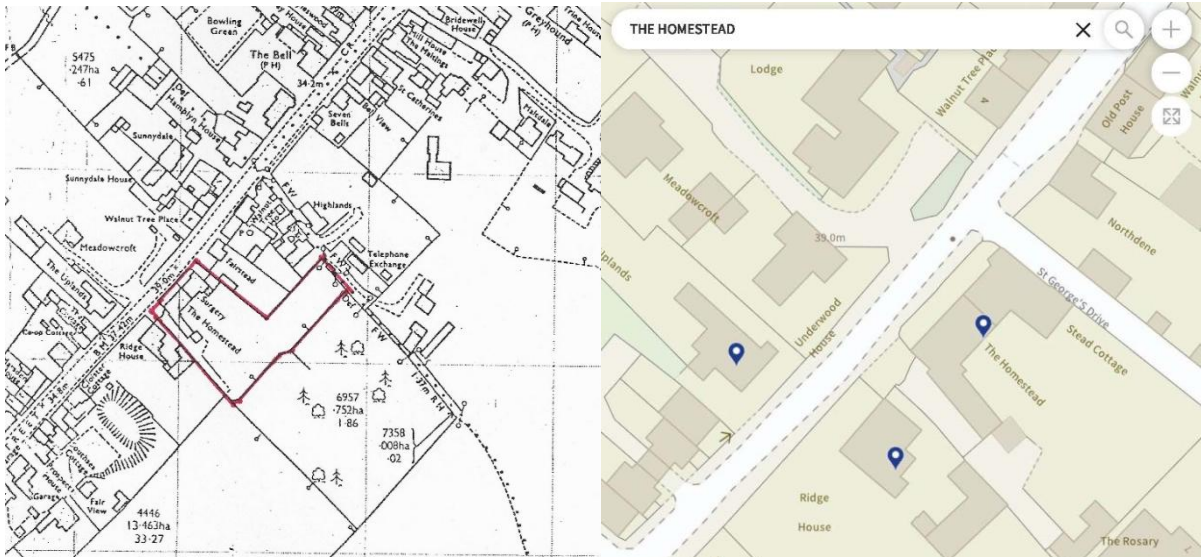
The applicant and her husband acquired the property in 1986 from the retiring senior doctor and the redundant surgery was converted and extended as a home for the applicant's mother-in-law. It was renamed as Stead Cottage at this time. After her death it was used as a letting cottage. It then served as a home office for the applicant's husband until his death in 2018 and is now, once again, surplus space.

The history of Stead Cottage goes back to the pair of C16 cottages of which a small remnant room survives. Through the mid C20 it served as the newly built village Surgery and was later converted and extended to become Stead Cottage. This application seeks to reinstate Stead Cottage as an independent dwelling for the elderly applicant for her use to live in in comfort and safety.



The Street, Rickingham c 1930 with The Homestead and the cottages burnt down in the 1930's

Historic Ordnance Survey mapping clearly shows the property split and labelled as The Homestead and Surgery, and on current OS mapping and Historic England Listing Maps as The Homestead and Stead Cottage (see below and attached site plan).



The combined property lies within the Botesdale Conservation Area

There are no tree preservation orders at the property.

The property sits well away from the flood risk zone.

Planning History of the Property:

Previous planning searches on the property register online can reveal that the following historical planning applications for the property under the following listing:

- Planning application - erection of 1no single storey dwelling. Ref. no: dc/21/02642 | status: Refused
- Erection of garage/cart shed and new boundary wall (revised scheme to that approved under 2711/07) Ref. no: 1922/08 | status: Granted
- Demolition of part of wall adjacent to St Georges Drive. ref. no: 1923/08 | status: Granted
- Retention of garden gate. Ref. no: 0969/05 | status: Granted
- Retention of walls along entrance road. Ref. no: 0973/05/ | status: Granted
- Erection of cart shed and insertion of four dormer windows. Ref. no: 0531/91/ | status: Granted
- Change of use of existing studio to art gallery, picture framing studio and gift shop, including use of existing access and laying out of car park. Ref. no: 0530/91/ | status: Granted
- Retention of work to demolish greenhouse and erect single storey rear extension with pitched roof over existing flat roof and minor internal alterations. Ref. no: 0139/89/lb | status: Granted

Justification:

The Homestead is a very attractive and substantial home and its separation from Stead Cottage will not impact its use as such and its historic core is not affected by this proposal. It has five bedrooms,

a large garden, independent vehicular access, ample parking, a garage and a cart shed/studio. The property will become available for a new family thereby increasing local housing stock.

The submitted proposal for Stead Cottage creates an independent home for the applicant which is safe and practical for an elderly person with limited mobility. The design allows for level wheelchair access between all the principal rooms, and a bathroom and kitchen designed for those with limited accessibility. Whilst the property is almost entirely single storey it has sufficient upstairs attic space to accommodate an overnight carer or visiting relatives. It is not possible to provide safe disabled/elderly living in The Homestead, which has very steep stairs and a multitude of steps between almost all the downstairs rooms and facilities making current access between areas difficult.

Impact on The Homestead

The submitted proposal to separate the properties involves minimal work to The Homestead. Two internal connecting doors will be blocked, but the doors themselves will be reinstated providing cupboards instead, preserving the existing internal appearance.

Externally the proposal divides the large garden in a sympathetic manner with a short length of brick and flint wall (A-B on Block Plan) close to the building and a woven hazel fence and hedge with a natural planting scheme on both sides (B-C on Block Plan). See the Ecology Statement for planting scheme and attached drawings for detail on the wall construction.

There are no changes to the exterior structure of The Homestead.

The exterior of Stead Cottage is also unchanged except for the replacement of one unsightly modern window with French doors to provide a sunny inside space for the applicant. The proposed softwood timber French Doors are detailed in the drawings submitted with this application.

Internal partition walls in Stead Cottage will be largely reinstated in their previous positions to provide the main downstairs bedroom and disabled access bathroom for the applicant.

An entrance hall and a new staircase will be created with a further reinstated partition wall, which recreates the footprint of the original surgery entrance and patient waiting room. This entrance is accessed from The Street (see photo at end of this statement).

The new staircase provides access to the second bedroom and bathroom which involves adjusting the layout of modern partition walls.

The proposed division of The Homestead from Stead Cottage is fully reversable should the need arise in the future



The Homestead (right) and Stead Cottage (left) view from The Street which will remain unchanged



The Homestead rear garden view



The Homestead additional rear garden and cart shed /studio



Stead Cottage rear garden view

Access Statement

The Homestead access is unaffected by the proposal with an existing independent drive as shown in the photo below, ample parking and a garage.



The Homestead driveway access from The Street

Stead Cottage is served by St Georges Drive, a private road over which the property has a right of way and existing vehicular and pedestrian access. There are large vehicular gates into the property and parking and turning space for at least three cars. See photos below and the attached site plan.



Entrance to St Georges Drive from The Street with Stead Cottage on the right. Existing entrance door with direct level access for persons with limited mobility.



Existing Double Gates off St Georges Drive to rear garden of Stead Cottage which to used for vehicle access and parking



Stead Cottage rear garden and proposed parking area and existing vehicular access gates behind



Stead Cottage also has the benefit of the former Surgery front door providing direct pedestrian access from The Street. See photo left.

This will be reinstated as the main entrance again into to Stead Cottage.