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CONDITION SURVEY AND SCHEDULE OF WORKS

SANDERS FARM CROYLE

Further to our visit to the property on Thursday 9th February 2023, we comment as follows on the general structural condition of the ruinous farmhouse, in the context of the proposed Planning and Listed Building Consent application to consolidate and repair the ruins, so that the longevity of this historically important building can be protected.

This report should be read in conjunction with information as prepared by the Architects and other Consultants as may be relevant, together with the accompanying marked-up drawings.

Outline History

Sanders Farm is a Grade II Listed building and dates back to early C16 with later alterations, including in the late C19 and in the first half of C20. The farmhouse was first listed in 1987, being recorded as derelict and partially ruinous. The name of the property has recently been changed from Sowell Farm to Sanders Farm, as there has been confusion historically regarding the property's Listed status due to the neighbouring farm located 150m south of the site having an almost identical name.

General Construction

The oldest elements are constructed from a combination of rubble stone with earth mortar, and cob. The inserted chimney stacks would have been built with rubble stone but have since been rebuilt in brick, likely during C19 and C20. Later build additions are constructed of brick and block, with some elements built with a cementitious mortar. A brick buttress has been added to the south wall, and the

north wall has three buttresses, constructed from a combination of brick and/or stone.

The original roof structure was probably made up of a jointed cruck truss and purlin construction supporting a thatched roof, although this has not been evidenced. Smoke blackened rafters and battening were recorded in the initial property Listing description.

The first floor may not have been inserted until as late as C17, and was probably made up with boarding on joists/beams.

Where evident, the older internal walls are timber framed with cob infill, with later built walls constructed from brick or later block.

Internal timber frame wall with cob infill.

No floor finishes were evident, and the floor construction was not mentioned in the original Listing.

Foundations and substructures are likely limited and are thought to probably include a nominal widening of the substructure stonework bearing on the intact bearing ground at a shallow depth.

General Condition and Evident Defects

Our inspection was limited due to the extent of debris and vegetative growth.

Generally, the structure is in very poor condition and is currently little more than a gable with some ruinous walls. Later build elements are more intact due to their construction with cementitious mortar. It is likely that without significant intervention the condition of the ruined building will deteriorate further. Repair, consolidation and protection works should be carefully undertaken in a sequenced manner to ensure that the building's short-term stability is protected.

The condition of the building is outlined, along with recommendations for protection works, on SK.01, 02 and 03, together with the Architect's supporting information.

The most vulnerable areas are the north and south walls. It is recommended that an exterior support and restraint scaffold is constructed adjacent to both the north and south walls. The south wall is reasonably true to line, but the north wall is leaning out to a considerable degree local to the north-eastern corner.

Leaning north wall.

Exposed heads to the random rubble stone walls should be sporadically consolidated, and the wall head weather protected to allow for water runoff and to protect the core. This could be achieved with a lime mortar capping or alternatively a polythene sheet or equal. Similarly, the wall heads to remaining parts of cob walls should be protected as soon as practical as these are vulnerable, with evidence of recent collapse on the east side. These elements could be protected with a soft turf capping, or possibly polythene.

With respect to the south wall, the shelves in the western side of the chimney stack have shrubs and other vegetation growing from them. This should be carefully cleared, and the shelves weather protected with lime mortar or equal.

South wall, with vegetated shelves in chimney stack.

There are a few openings within the north and south walls where lintels have failed, and the surround stonework is weak. A temporary timber frame should be constructed in these openings to provide support to the stonework and prevent further failure. The existing lintels have largely rotted out and should be replaced with new or reclaimed oak lintels to suit in due course.

As mentioned previously, there is a considerable amount of debris and vegetation within the building and the surroundings, which requires careful clearing and assessment. The clearing will likely reveal more unstable elements of the structure which will need to be reviewed at the appropriate stage.

General Conclusions and Recommendations

- Repair, consolidation and protection works should be sequenced, only working on small areas at a time, and allowing for all necessary temporary propping to ensure that the work can be carried out safely.
- Removal of vegetation and debris should be undertaken carefully with necessary recording as required.
- Scaffolds should be constructed to temporarily stabilise the north and south walls, allowing to wrap around the northwest corner as required.
- The stone wall heads should be consolidated as required and weather protected to allow rainwater runoff.
- Cob wall heads should be protected with a turf capping, or similar.

- Temporary timber frames should be constructed within openings in order to adequately prop and support to the surrounding weak stonework.

We hope that the above is helpful, and if there are any queries, or you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Kind regards,

Paul B Carpenter
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