

OAK TREE FARMHOUSE, KENTON – DESIGN, ACCESS AND HERITAGE STATEMENT



RENOVATION OF GRADE 2 WING BACK TO DWELLING, ERECTION OF 2 NO. CART LODGES – PLANNING AND LISTED APPLICATION

## EXISTING USE

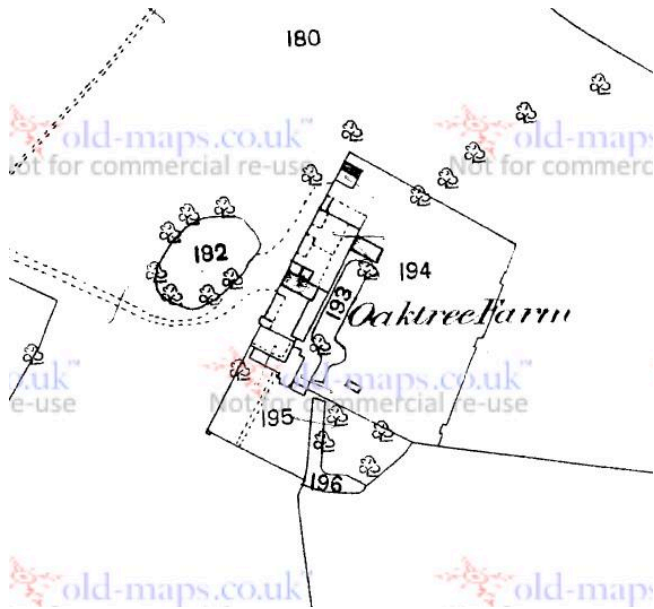
A derelict farmhouse, Oak Tree Farmhouse is a residential dwelling on the at risk register.

## PROPOSALS

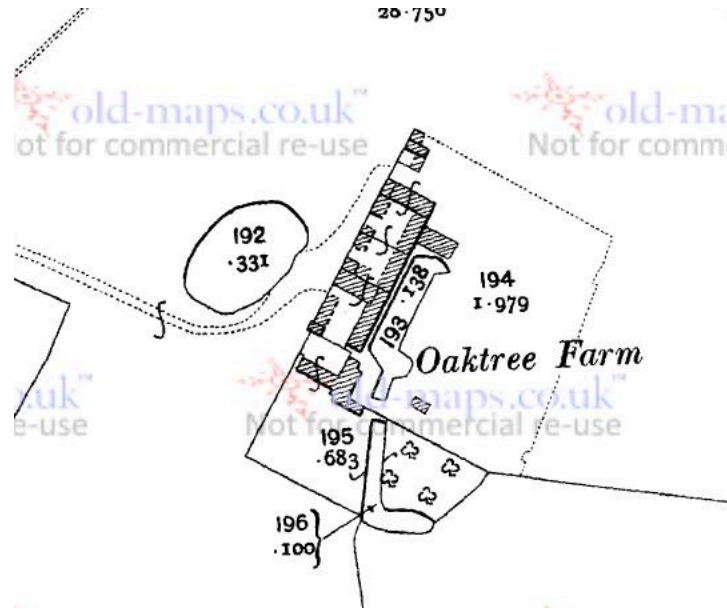
The application proposes to renovate the abandoned grade 2 listed wing of the farmhouse to bring it back into use as an independent dwelling. The owners recognise their responsibility as listed building owner and wish to renovate the house wing with support from the LPA.

## OLD MAPS

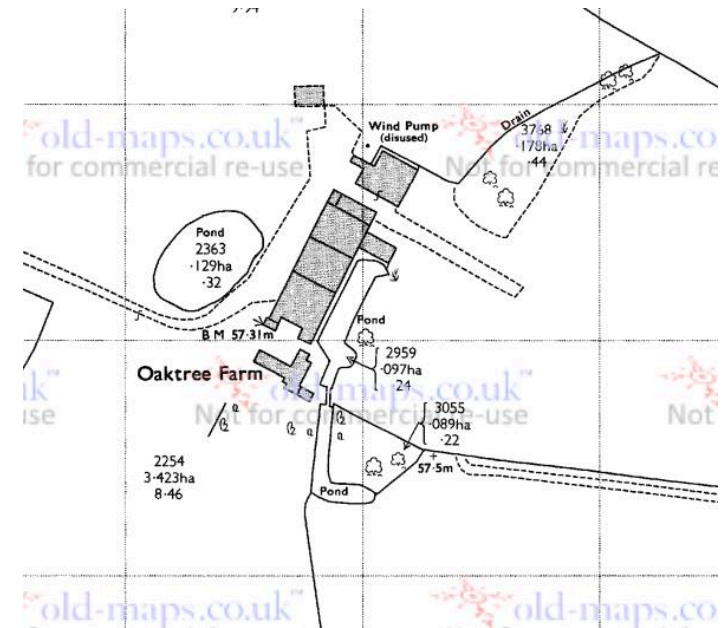
The below maps show the house was part of a large agricultural holding with numerous barns to the North. The house footprint remains largely unchanged over time.



1886 map



1904 map



1977 map

## HERITAGE LISTING

House. Mid C16, slightly altered c.1600, and with, in mid C20, the rebuilding of the service end and a later service wing. Timber-framed with, in part, wattle and daub and a small amount of brick infill. Some plaster remaining. Colourwashed and rendered brick to rebuilt service wing. Pantile roof with brick ridge stacks. 3-unit plan originally, with slightly later further service wing at right angles, the service end and this wing rebuilt mid C20. The parlour and hall units survive though long unoccupied. L-plan, the original range gable facing. This range probably becoming lobby-entry c.1600. 2 storeys. Facing gable has concrete block to ground floor, with close-studded framing above. Massive jowled wall posts and mid rails and cranked braces. On left side to centre left a doorway with panelled door, the upper panels glazed, and various openings and remains of diamond mullion or sunk quadrant moulded wooden windows. Close-studded framing also with massive wall posts and mid rails. Similar on right side with some loss of framing though posts and wall plates survive. One complete diamond mullion window on first floor to far right. C20 rebuilt part adjoins at rear.

INTERIOR. The large parlour unit occupying 2 bays of framing has heavy chamfered joists and bridging beam. Remains of probably original red paint on studs. Brick stack with open fireplace and hood. Hall unit has heavy joists and fireplace probably remodelled C18. Early C19 winder stair in the lobby entrance which was probably created when brick stack replaced timber-framed smoke hood c.1600. Framed partitions on both floors. Over the first floor a queen post roof survives unusually intact with 4 cranked tie beam trusses and curved wind braces and coupled rafters. First floor ceilings have longitudinal chamfered tie beams and were probably inserted c.1600. Further cranked braces visible. In the rebuilt wing a large brick stack with open fireplace survives. Although deterioration has taken place in the unrebuilt wing this wing is larger than normal, has significant survival of mid C16 fabric and an unusually intact roof.

The farmhouse forms a good farmstead group with barn to north east (q.v.).



North View

## HERITAGE STATEMENT

The below describes the existing frame and heritage asset

## FABRIC AND FEATURES

The frame is in a very poor state of repair and urgent works are needed to preserve the building. It should be noted that it is unsafe to enter the derelict wing and as such only external inspections at distance can take place. This lack of access means that works will have to progress with LPA input once safe access can be gained to the interiors.

The house consists of a 4 cell frame. The second cell from the east is taken up by back to back fireplaces and single chimney stack with North winder staircase as is commonly found in such dwellings.

There are some very detailed drawing works by the historian Philip Aitken included for information with this application as these were taken at a time when access was still possible and show some useful heritage background and a 3 d view.

Despite its condition large sections of the frame and chimney stack remain in place and a thorough schedule of renovation and reinstatement will allow this building to be saved.

## SITE

The farm group sits north-east of the farmhouse to the East of Debenham Road along a farm track, a relationship long established and seen on the above historic maps. The maps show a large group of barns and foldyards North of the farmhouse. Some evidence of these ranges still exists in terms of plinth brickwork and the garage just South of the barn/ North of the farmhouse. This range looks to be of Victorian origins and likely that these single storey ranges were built coinciding with the expansion of clayland dairy farming.

The farm buildings were constrained by the access farm track to the west and the elongated pond to the east. The arrangement of buildings was closely grouped with continuous built form along the eastern edge, extending almost to the north end of the house and with the threshing barn set in the centre – with midstrey porch facing to the centre yard. The only buildings now surviving include the barn, farmhouse and a small brick/ blockwork building to the north, which is much altered.

The constraint of the track and pond are important aspects of the setting of the group and farmhouse, informing the understanding of the development of the farm yard and as such contribute to the significance of both listed building and development of the yard. These limits to development should be retained in any development.

The house itself appears in these maps to have a domestic curtilage to the south and east, with a small area to the north enclosed by a wall. It was very much part of the farm group. This relationship is still intact and largely unaltered and as such the preservation and renovation of the farmhouse will retain the agricultural relationship and inform of the origins of both buildings. If the farmhouse was lost the setting of the group would be diminished.

## SIGNIFICANCE AND IMPACT

We have shown that the building subject of this application is not only significant in that it is listed, largely intact in terms of framing and the remaining element of a much larger group but that its survival is also important in that it demonstrates an important historical relationship between at risk farmhouse and agricultural group.

## SCHEDULE OF WORKS TO LISTED BUILDING

- Existing frame to remain intact and to be supported off a temporary scaffold
- Remains of old plinths to be removed from site. Bricks recycled and used within inner face of new plinths where possible or in chimney repair
- Existing concrete and earth floor to be removed and levels reduced. Install new limecrete floor with glapor insulation and underfloor heating.
- New trench fill concrete foundations to be installed below existing plinths
- New cavity brick plinths to be constructed (215mm inner brick leaf below new/ existing soleplates, 100mm insulated cavity, 100mm outer brick leaf. All in Flemish bond.
- Rebed existing sole plates onto new brick plinth
- Install new soleplates in oak with pegged joints where missing.
- Repair frame as per repairs schedule (drawn up once access is gained following structure made safe)
- Install diagonal bracing to stabilise frame in original brace positions.
- Strip roof tile finish and store for reuse.
- insulate roof ready for reinstallation of roof tiles on counterbattens and battens. Reinstall roof tiles
- Install insulation between studs, sheepswool to be used and battens with oak laths and lime rendered walls with either Beecosil or Keim breathable paint externally.
- Plinth relationship to render to be flush as per historical relationship
- Repair existing brick chimney and install new lintels over openings. Repoint in lime mortar.
- First fix plumbing and wiring
- Install flush casement windows and pentice boards over windows in historical and new openings as per design drawings. Windows in painted timber
- Internal fittings and finishes to complete
- Rainwater gutters and downpipes in black metal taken to adjacent ponds via soakaways.

## JUSTIFICATION

It is essential that the buildings find a sustainable long-term use. The retention of the house is not only desirable as it is a listed building in its own right, but also because it tells the story of and retains the historical relationship of the farm house and agricultural farm buildings. If the house or barn is lost it inevitably weakens the setting of the other.

The renovation of the house will form another role in the evolution of this site. The house will likely be marketed with residential consent. As such the house renovation, following on from the barn approval consent will ultimately see the removal of both buildings from the register and two listed buildings restore to their former glory along with the retention of the key relationship between the tow and setting.



## DESIGN

The design simply looks to renovate and reinstate utilizing existing windows and openings. The cellular layout will remain and existing stud walls are retained within the proposed layout.

Materials and finishes are envisioned to match those that were originally used and to ensure breathable finishes are utilized alongside historic details.

## PRE APPLICATION ADVICE

The LPA have expressed their agreement to work towards renovation of this asset.

## ACCESS

This use needs to be sufficiently valuable so as to support the substantial costs of renovation. Residential use provides a suitable solution as its use matches and is compatible with that of the adjacent farmhouse and barn. It also adds sufficient value and creates a secure long-term sustainable use.

## SUMMARY

This application seeks to renovate the grade 2 listed at risk house wing to create a secure and sustainable long-term use removing the asset from the register and retaining for the long term the grade 2 listed home. It will also see the retention of an important historical relationship between farmhouse and barn.





