

Hafren Court

Design, Access & HIA Statement

Flats 2 and 4 Hafren Court

Grade II Listed Building: List Entry No: 1100763

Address: 1 Hafren Court, Bewdley, Worcestershire, DY12 2AR

Listing NGR: S07855475382

List Description: “2 houses, now six flats. Probably late 17th, with mid-19th Century and late 20th Century alterations. Rendered brick with tiled roof. Two-storeys with attic lit by five gabled dormers. Bands to first and ground floor. Five windows, 16 pane 20th Century sashes. Ground floor boxed glazing oar sashes. Entrance to No. 1 between two right hand windows has wooden architrave three pane over light and plain door. Entrance to other flats between two windows to left is recessed with a glazed door. Lean-to against the west hand gable incorporates some square panel timber framing at gable end. The main range has three struts to collar with ‘V’ struts in apex.

Introduction

Flats 2 and 4 Hafren Court occupy the end bay of the terrace and accommodation is arranged over two floors with a mono pitch roof abutting the three-storey range adjacent. It is possible that this end bay has lost its attic storey at some point. It is likely that the terrace was originally possibly two dwellings and was originally a late 17th Century box timber framed building with the framing subsequently replaced by brickwork. The only residual framing is the gable end of flats 2 and 4. Timber framing is evident at first floor level on the exterior and is partially incomplete. Framing at ground floor level has been uncovered during investigation works regarding damp penetration and is only partially present and discontinuous.

The property was converted into flats circa 1973. When the conversion was carried out inappropriate materials were used which has resulted in problems with penetrating damp and lack of breathability and subsequent extensive damage to framing. On the exterior framework cement mortar patching to the framing has again led to moisture being trapped within the timber and serious degradation of the fabric. In flat 2 the gypsum plaster has been removed from the internal face of the gable and has revealed a residual framing. The framing is in a seriously poor condition as moisture has been trapped in the fabric leading to extensive wet rot, dry rot and death-watch beetle infestation, to such an extent that the timber is crumbling away to dust. Virtually all mortice and tenon connections have been lost and the framing is incomplete. Two new openings have been formed to access the single-storey kitchen and bathroom extensions abutting the gable end and there is an original blocked central opening in modern brickwork. Some brick panels survive although they are in a poor condition and unstable.

It is interesting to note that the bearing of the two spine beams are on cross rail positioned beneath the mid-rail which may suggest that actually the timber framing is a later reconstruction possibly reusing framing elements when the main framing was replaced by brickwork.

Due to the very poor condition of the framing elements at ground floor it would be virtually impossible to repair and retain any historic fabric and even if the framing were retained it is discontinuous and would be structurally unstable. The sole plate is missing and possibly only one post capable of retention (P2) and even then it would require section splicing at both the top and bottom and the mortice for the rail reforming.

At first floor the framing is in a better condition and it is believed to be capable of repair and retention, although the mid-rail would need to be replaced in its entirety. Repairs to the shoulders of studs and posts and introducing new tenons and reforming mortices with face patches are required to most elements of the framing.

The Proposals

In order to carry out repairs to the first floor framing it is intended to record and carefully dismantle ground floor framing and set on one side and set aside bricks from the infill panels for re-use. The first floor framing will also be carefully dismantled along with brickwork panels (bricks set aside for reuse).

In order to provide a firm and structurally sound foundation to the first floor framing it is proposed to excavate for a new footing and strip foundation and rebuild the ground floor section of the gable in brickwork. A new mid-rail will be introduced to sit at the head of the wall fixed on stainless steel dowels and the first floor framing will be repaired and reconstructed, introducing missing elements in new oak. The brickwork infill panels will then be reinstated.

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Heritage Assessment Table

Area	Proposed Work	Assessment of Impact	Proposed Mitigation	Residual Impact
1. Ground Floor Gable End	Remove all of badly damaged and discontinuous timber framing and unstable brickwork and replacement with new brickwork. Removal of inappropriate gypsum plastering.	This inevitably leads to a loss of historic fabric, although its seriously deleterious condition means that repair and retention is not possible. The new foundation and brickwork wall will provide a structurally sound base for the repair and reinstatement of the first floor framing. Use of lime plaster will ensure that the structure is breathable. There is some question as to whether the framing of this gable end is primary or part of a reconstruction.	Preserve by photographic record and measured survey drawing.	Minor negative.
2. Gable end first floor.	Careful dismantling of existing framing and brickwork infill panels. Repair and reconstruction along with reinstatement of missing framing elements and reinstatement of brick infill panels.	Residual framing will be carefully repaired and reinstated and the structural integrity of the first floor gable end framing will be reintroduced with the addition of missing framing elements. Breathable insulation and lime plaster will be introduced to the internal face of the framing.	Framing elements will be recorded prior to dismantling labelled with unique reference numbers and set aside for repair. Photographic record to be taken prior to dismantling.	Major benefit.