

Shane and Anne have recently taken ownership of a grade II listed 17th century farmhouse. Park Farm Braiseworth, Suffolk IP23 7HB.

The property has been left unoccupied for several years. The building has previously suffered from some well-meaning repairs that has I believe involved the use of some inappropriate materials. Most importantly and evidently the property has suffered apparently from criminal activity involving the theft of most of the ground floor clay floor tiles (although not thought to be original features), the majority of the upper room floorboards have been stolen (a desperate shame). The outside paving and what looks like a modern fire escape has also been taken along with the entirety of a plumbing system.

The purpose of this report is simply to outline proposals for Park Farm, Farmhouse. Generally, and in the main most areas are simple repairs and long delayed maintenance. The homeowner understands a repair to be where decayed or deteriorated materials are removed and replaced in a sympathetic and controlled way and replaced with comparable good quality materials to suit the period and effected in a traditional way.

It is not felt that any of the suggested works should affect the special architectural or historic interest of the building. Very close attention will be paid to retaining and repairing all aspects of the building.

Proposed work at Park Farm Braiseworth:

Updated 20/02/2024



The proposal is to excavate the interior floors ensuring that sufficient depth 250mm to allow for blown glass insulation, Geotex fabric and lime Crete screeding, with underfloor piping to ensure moderate background warmth. This system will allow 'breathing' through the floor slab.

REF 1



A

An RSJ has been inserted in place of a replacement timber.



C



Boxing, hiding the RSJ beneath

Whilst most timbers appear sound, the most easterly bay shows as many as 5 badly deteriorated floor joists. One is visibly broken through.



B



D

RSJ replacement of original timber



The above illustrations show a significant timber {A} within the frame has been replaced with a metal RSJ housed in an oak panelling.

{B} The RSJ inserted in place of a timber.

{C} A few timbers have suffered chronic destruction from boring insects.

{D} The sections of Lath and plaster have been removed and replaced with plaster board.

Following consultation with Rick Lewis it seems that this RSJ may well be best left in situ.

Smaller degraded timbers would be replaced with aged oak or elm to suit the frame and restore integrity.

During these works any disturbed plaster work would be replaced with laths and lime plaster in the traditional style and method. Increasing breathability of the building.

The buildings owner is discussing this work with Rick Lewis known as a leading expert in timber frame manufacture and repair. The owner of the building will seek to carry out such work only with a reputable timber framer and with the permission and direction of the conservation department. The proposal here is simply to replace up to five in number timbers that have quite literally been bored out to destruction.



REF 2

The pictures show a failed timber. Seemingly the timber has been placed at some stage to support timbers cut through to form a large stair way. The timber seemingly has succumbed to water damage, rot and death watch beetle attack over a period, possibly relating to an historical water leak from the roof.

This timber is a relatively modern (old reclaimed timber has been used) addition to the building estimates of 20 years. The timber itself does not as such form part of the timber frame. This section of the building is probably Victorian and is of solid brick construction. The proposal is simply to replace this timber like for like. The timber shall be bought into position through an open window with the removal and replacement of the same bricks around the supportive section of the external wall.

It appears that the internal walls of the solid brick rear extension have been skimmed with modern gypsum plaster. The homeowner intends to strip back in some large areas and have a heritage builder re skim in lime finish to again increase the breathability of the building.

On the ground floor the rear room seems to previously been used as a kitchen. The homeowner intends to divide this room with a stud work wall after the floors have been lime creted to form a down stairs cloak room. This will require a hole in the exterior brick work at low level to connect waste pipes to an already existing soil stack. **(It is believed that this may require consent)**



The attic room has been boarded in chipboard laid on insulation on a layer of plastic. The homeowner intends to remove this modern material. It is expected that the conservation department will agree that this kind of vapour barrier will have potential to cause condensation and associated deterioration. The homeowner would like to know the thoughts from the conservation department regarding replacement boards. Weather new solid oak boards are preferable to reclaimed older boards.

Windows to be retained and repaired, there are many types of frames with different styles present, some glazing panels are of significant age. Individual glass lights to be repaired period glass works, the panes will be replaced in situ.



REF 3

It seems that possibly at the time of sole plate repairs the lower section of rendering were replaced and repaired using cement. The homeowner intends to seek permission to remove any sign of cement render particularly at the lower level say 900mm and inspect small sections and replace with lime to improve the aesthetic and to better honour the construction methods used in history. It is believed that the lime will encourage better breathability at lower levels. Also, at low level on the southeast corner there is signs of brick work disturbance. Currently it seems that tree roots and damaged rainwater goods have caused the disturbance. It is proposed that the brick work should be removed a small excavation in order to evaluate then replace and re-mortared in lime.



REF 4

This door seems to have been created to service a self-contained flat within the building. There is evidence of a modern fire escape set up. The proposal is to remove the door and replace a timber that may have been removed from the frame. The owners would like to glaze between these timbers to create light and retain the opening as a feature.

Most doors internally have been removed. The homeowner wishes to establish whether the conservation department would prefer new doors of suitable quality or reclaimed doors of the period.

Exterior:

Facias need repairs to rotten sections.

It looks to be reproduction aluminium gutters have been used. The seals have failed possibly due to poor choice of sealant. The intention here is to remove the gutters and re seal and replace onto repaired boards.

Replace missing broken roof tile.

Replace rework the valley in lead.

Trees around house to be reduced or removed as necessary.

Ground height reduced at driveway and hard-core topping added.

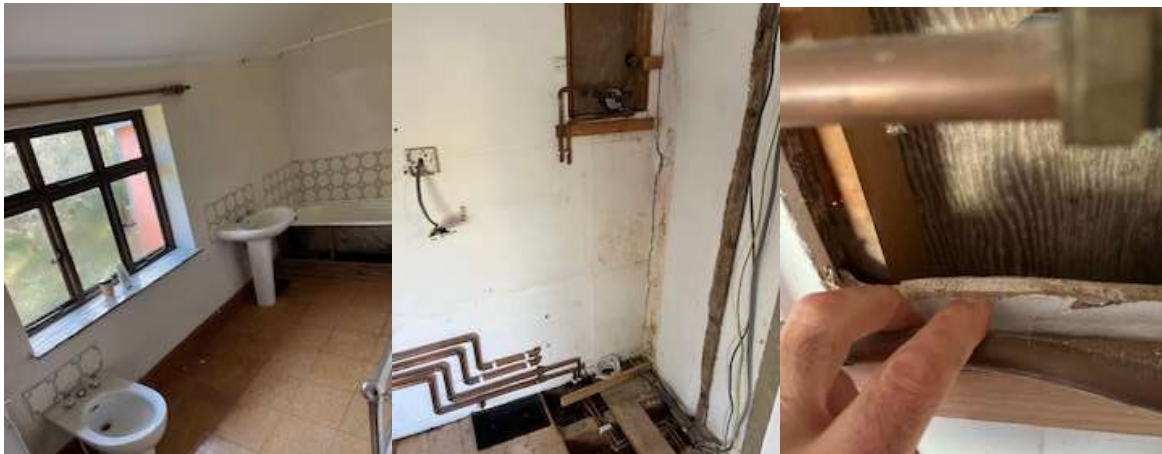
New drains to take roof water dug in to take water to the pond,

Electrical:

Safety check electrics

Plumbing:

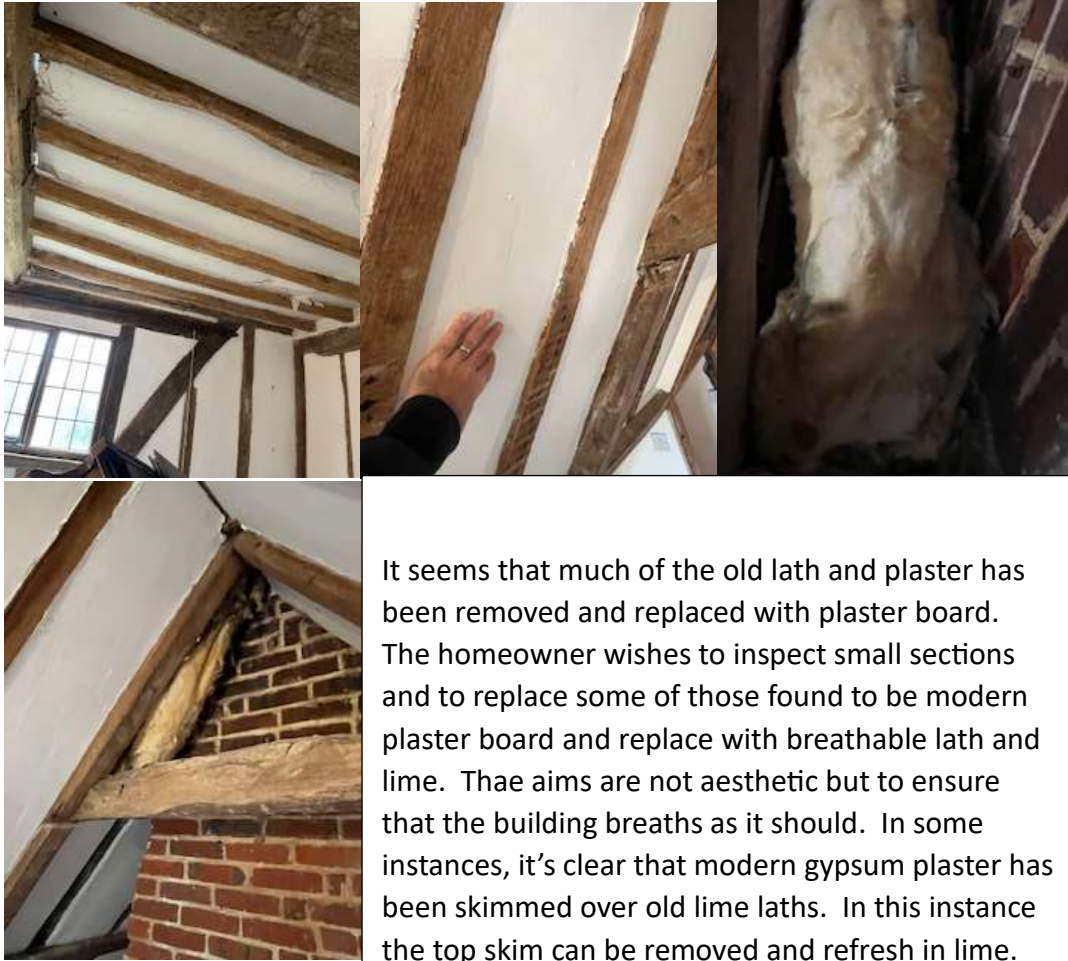
New heating pipes through out to new radiators use old runs and holes already drilled rather than creating new.



Large bathroom to be divided in two. Modern plasterboard seen. Modern timbers to stud work. Fibre glass insulation.



The homeowner wishes to for a second bathroom from the existing main family bathroom space. This section is entirely modern stud work formed of plaster board and modern timbers. It is in the solid brick extension.



It seems that much of the old lath and plaster has been removed and replaced with plaster board. The homeowner wishes to inspect small sections and to replace some of those found to be modern plaster board and replace with breathable lath and lime. Thae aims are not aesthetic but to ensure that the building breaths as it should. In some instances, it's clear that modern gypsum plaster has been skimmed over old lime laths. In this instance the top skim can be removed and refresh in lime.

It is hoped that the contents of this report can be digested by the conservation officer and any concerns be fed back. It would be beneficial to have comment regarding the viewpoint of the conservation department regarding replacements for floor timbers and lost clay tiles. Is it better to use quality new materials that will age or reclaimed materials the doubtless fuels the type of destruction seen with in this building?

The homeowners look forward to hearing your feed back and welcome a site visit if necessary.