

Kent's Farmhouse, Brookpit Lane, Climping, BN17 5QU

Design and Access Statement

November 2020

Location: - This Grade 2 Listed period farmhouse is located in the centre of Climping village half a mile from the Climping beach. It adjoins open farmland, but is within a mile of Littlehampton and other transport connections.

The formal entrance to the original Georgian building is off a side road with its own parking forecourt and footpath directly to the front door. This access is less used in favour of the stable courtyard vehicle approach which takes the occupants to the kitchen entrance.

All the main garden areas plus swimming pool are south of the house, but most of the building's outlook tends to be east/west.

The Property: - This impressive period farmhouse is largely Georgian in character, but has earlier origins, the stone built gable end just to the north of the main Georgian house, being the original timber framed yeoman's farmhouse dating from the 17th Century. The Georgian parts of the house have all the elegance and proportions associated with the period with high corniced ceilings, large window bays with panelling, shutters and impressive fireplaces. The Victorians also added to the house creating a large music room of over 24ft in length and having a 14ft high corniced ceiling and full height sash windows making an ideal space for parties and entertaining. In addition to the main reception rooms, a beamed sitting room and farmhouse style kitchen/breakfast room with four oven oil fired Aga.

The generous accommodation on the first floor is reached by way of two staircases and provides five bedrooms including a guest or principle suite with shower room, together with additional well-appointed shower room and family bathroom to serve the remaining four bedrooms. Four further rooms, two with beams and exposed timber frame, can be found on the second floor.

There is a sizeable basement to the original Georgian building that is now remote to the kitchen zone at the opposite end of the building. This space has potential to be upgraded.

Externally there are various separate and linked buildings to the main body of the house.

Double gates from Brookpit Lane open onto a courtyard surrounded by a range of brick and flint outbuildings including two double garages, one with

inspection pit and several workshops, one with three phase power. Partially walled gardens lie to the eastern façade of the property with an acre of wild flower garden to the south. A stone terrace runs the length of the house and is approached via doors from both the kitchen/breakfast room and garden room, which has a run of bi-folding doors opening onto the terrace and is a modern extension to the Victorian and Georgian sections.

This sheltered sitting area looks out over broad areas of lawn to the paddock and farmland beyond. Around the house area is the garden divided by neatly clipped beech hedging and a five bar gate provides an access to the kitchen garden planted with vegetables and fruit trees. From here an arched gate set in an attractive stone wall leads through to the heated swimming pool which is situated in a walled courtyard garden.

The Proposals for the Main House – are to make minimal changes to the format of the various historical evolutions, but correct and improve some of the modern and recent changes that detract from the original architecture and interior spaces. Apart from several minor changes within the main building, the key proposals fall into six packages of work which are:-

- 1) **Roof to Georgian Building** – Reinstate the pair of four casement, flat roofed dormer windows to the rear of the Georgian building at second floor as a complete replica of what has gone missing. This work includes a full overhaul internally and re-roofing to bring this part of the property to a good standard and avoid the current leakages of both water and heat.
- 2) **Access to the 17th Century Second Floor Rooms** – There is no staircase to two established bedrooms in the roof of the original building. This feature was removed in favour of an access trap and a roof ladder. The proposed stair is to comply with current Building Regulations for means of escape, but at the same time be positioned to not damage the main structure.
- 3) **Garden/Sun Room** – has been undertaken as an infil to the back terrace, but in an impractical manner to not create the space necessary without various brick plinths being in the wrong location. The proposal is to substitute these pillars and posts with steel beams on a new outside support, but at the same time push out the glazed screen to provide more usable space to what is likely to be the sunniest and most

used room of the house. This would be linked to the Georgian sitting room by opening up an existing archway.

- 4) **Kitchen/Breakfast/Dining Room** – are all separate areas in the family end of the house, centred around the comfortable hub of most houses, the kitchen. This room has already had modern brickwork additions to bolster up the original central oak beam, but would benefit from being better linked to the dining room internally, plus creating a breakfast room midway. The whole run then creates a usable family, day to day, space. Two oak posts are then shown to substitute for the modern brick piers.
- 5) **Central Bathroom Zone** – is located in the modern wing of the house at first floor level. There is very little change to the fabric of the building as it is where all the wet areas already congregate. The proposal is to fit out four bathrooms; three at first floor level, one at second, plus cloakroom and kitchen at ground floor level. It is a more practical use of space and adds an en suite guest bathroom to bedroom 2.
- 6) **Basement/Cellar** – to the Georgian house is now under used and damp. It would benefit from being overhauled and given natural light and ventilation. The proposal is to open up one corner of the room and create a 2m x 3m light well to illuminate that section of the room with south light. By also fitting a bathroom below the staircase it provides for a varied use such as bedroom suite/games room/home office or TV room.

Over and above these six key areas of alterations, there are other minor changes and maintenance items worth mentioning that need to be considered under Listed Building matters. The list which will be better explained at a site visit is:-

- 1) Repair and re-tile south end gable of the Georgian house where severe damage has occurred.
- 2) Stitch back a structural crack to the west gable of the 17th Century section adjacent to a major flue stack.
- 3) Re-open blocked doorway next to the proposed second kitchen in the wing.
- 4) Open up wall to main bedroom currently housing the cylinder (over the oil fired boiler) and better access the master bedroom avoiding the

current tight step arrangement at the head of the main staircase, and link a dressing room/lobby with a new, more spacious master bathroom using one of the bedrooms.

- 5) Within the master bedroom, remove the modern shower room and open up ceiling to period roof space over to show off the original structure.
- 6) Move out of the house the oil fired boiler and water storage to be next to the oil tank in adjacent linked building.
- 7) Overhaul and upgrade all the heating and plumbing installation plus rewire the house. Bring all of the M & E up to current standards so as to avoid potential likelihood of flooding and fire.

Supplementary Proposals for Outbuildings – There are several outbuildings within the site, two of which are proposed for upgrading and modernisation for supplementary ancillary use to the main property: -

- 1) **The Second Floor Garage Building** – which is west of the courtyard gates. This is currently used as a gym plus general storage. It is a substantial building with a proposed use as a one bedroom guest house/rental unit. The only change proposed externally is to install a front door and substitute the garage doors with a pair of deep windows. Otherwise there is little change to the building with the exception of gallery/stair over bedroom and forming the bathroom.
- 2) **The Fruit Store Building** – is a single storey rectangular structure with existing windows and doorway. The proposal is to modernise this space to provide a remote study/snug for the main house with its own toilet and kitchenette as ancillary accommodation. The only external change is to remove a small end window and substitute it with a pair of patio doors accessing a south facing terrace.

The Design/Materials – the overall principle with all the changes has been to reflect what currently exists as the architecture in terms of windows and doors, plus copy exactly the materials employed on the original construction e.g. stock bricks, hand-made clay tiles, timber windows and doors, single glazing and lead flat roofs (no felt).

Access – the general access day to day tends to be via the courtyard area to the south and through the kitchen. The other formal entrance is still in use

but less practical. Apart from the expanded garden/sun lounge bi-fold doors, the circulation around the house and through to the garden has remained unchanged and works quite comfortably for the current owners.

Conclusion – The proposals taken as a whole amount to very little in planning terms with only the enlarged garden/sun room being requested; the two dormers being a reinstatement of those that had existed historically. Otherwise the house and outbuildings involve minor changes in order for the building to operate in a logical and practical manner. It is also benefiting from a full overhaul of its fabric and M & E technology to keep the building operating for many years to come.