



HERITAGE DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT -18Q-04 – DECEMBER 2023



**To accompany a planning and listed building application for a replacement rear dormer at
Nurstead Hall, Nurstead Lane, Longfield Hill, Kent, DA3 7AN**

Scope of proposals: Replacement rear dormer.

Background & introduction

Nurstead Hall is listed as Grade II under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) *for its special architectural or historic interest*, first listed on the 26th of July 1983 and at the time of listing the house was known as Nurstead Hill Farmhouse.

Below is the List entry description of the property:

Entry Name: Nurstead Hill Farmhouse

Listing Date: 26th July 1983

Grade: II

C17 timber-framed and rendered. Two storey with half-hipped tiled roof. Five sash windows with glazing bars. Originally 3 but 2 eastern bays added. Moulded beams and ingle fireplace internally.

Nurstead Hall is a detached property situated on the south side of Nurstead Lane and lies approximately 2 miles south-east of Longfield railway station.

Brief description of existing house

The existing property is a C17 timber-framed vernacular house essentially consisting of four historic bays, one C19 bay extended to the east, and one C20 bay extended on the east of the C19 bay. The C20 bay was originally a single storey lean-to (outshot) which may have been contemporary with the C19 bay and was extended in height to a two-storey bay in the latter part of the 20th century. Two mid-late C20 extensions were added to the rear and a rear dormer built early in the 21st century. The walls are clad in cementitious plaster and the roof was predominately clad in hand-made clay tiles.

During the stripping out for approved works (ref: 20230669 & 20230670) more detail of the construction has come to light. The wall framing arrangement is of the typology that indicate the walls were always intended to have been clad and when an area of plaster was exposed it was noted that featheredge weatherboard was still fixed to the frame below the EML and cementitious plaster. Of the historic four roof bays to the west of the property, the most western two bays have a clasped purlin roof (side purlin) and the two adjoining bays have a butt purlin roof. A high proportion of re-used timbers from older roofs can be seen in these four bays but mainly in the clasped purlin bays to the west. An unusual feature of the roof construction to these four bays is that the eaves to the front elevation (north) has rafters resting flush on a pole-plate that is fitted to projecting joists that rest on the eaves-beam...conversely, at the rear elevation (south) the rafters sit directly on the eaves-beam and sets flush with its edge and a short sprocket added to each rafter to form an over-hang. The half-hipped end to the west has projecting rafter feet and the top of the rafters and hips are set to a gablet, a feature that was used less and less towards the end of the 17th century and was rarely used in houses beyond circa 1700.

The rear elevation (related to this application) has had a number of alterations and additions carried out in C20 along with a dormer added in C21. The two C20 rendered rear extensions have clay tiled roofs with a pitch of around 30 degrees, and have 'storm-proof' type casement windows painted white. The western most extension has large areas of fixed glazing and both extensions have access doors. The main house elevation has cementitious render over a predominantly timber-framed wall and has a modern rear door and 'storm-proof' type windows, which were a popular style of casement window in the 1970s. The two modern chimneys on the rear elevation are a subject of an ongoing listed building application ref: 20231172 currently pending consideration; the tall chimney is proposed to be reduced in height and the short chimney is proposed to be removed which will reduce their current impact on this elevation. However, the special historic and architectural significance of this elevation is very low given the extent of fairly modern alterations and additions. The existing C21 dormer is described in more detail below.

Existing dormer description, work carried out under application ref: 20020165 & 20000367

The existing dormer was constructed circa 20 years ago under planning and listed building application ref: 20020165 & 20000367 respectively. It has been constructed as a flat lead roof (stepped) with lead dormer cheeks and front clad in lead. The dormer has a painted softwood two opening casements (glazing patten - 2 over 4) separated by a mullion. The dormer window has begun to show signs of deterioration and has had poorly executed repairs carried out since its construction.



Existing rear dormer



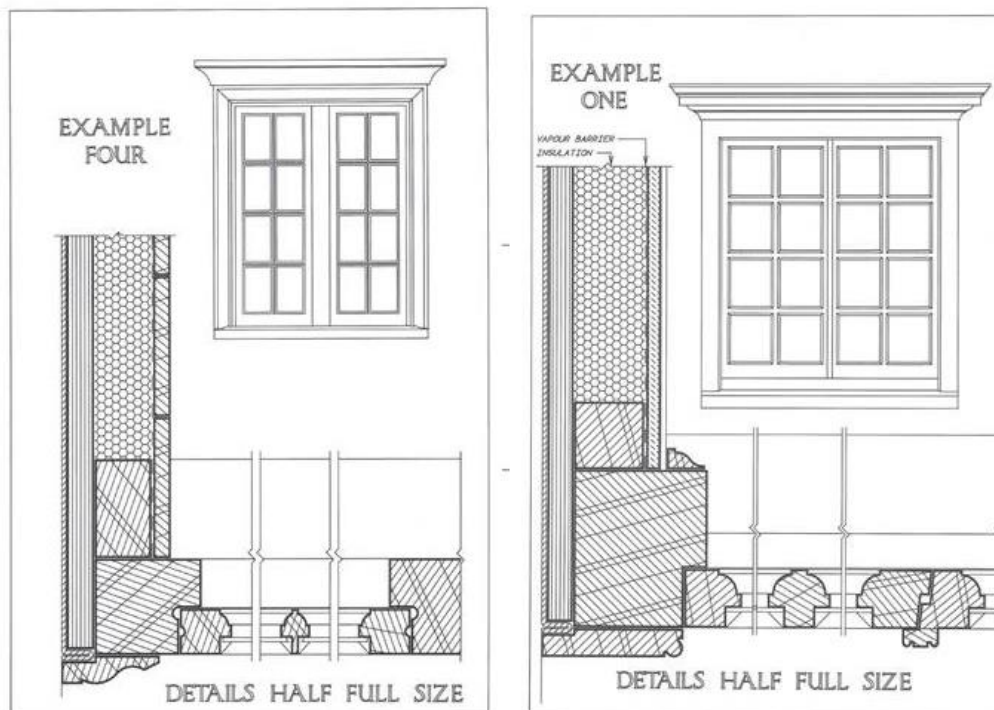
Existing rear dormer

Replacement dormer recently approved under application ref: 20230699 & 20230670

Initially the replacement dormer section of the application(s) sought to create a pitched roof dormer over the stairs accessing the attic. See image below:



However, during the application(s) feedback from the Conservation Officer was thus ‘...The proposed window has heavy cheeks and appears out of scale with the roof, being incorrectly detailed and clearly designed to accommodate the staircase to the attic. An appropriately designed box sash window may offer a more convincing dormer which should be based on the guidance note from English Heritage attached. (A variant on example 2 and 4)’. See extract below:



Subsequently the dormer drawings were revised as the other work included in the application(s) had become urgent to start. See image below:



The current application proposes an alternative dormer design that is of a traditional design and is a relatively ubiquitous form of dormer on Kentish farmhouses set in a rural location. See below:



The applicant seeks to construct the replacement dormer with a pitched roof but is willing to concede on changes to the previously proposed pitched roof design, for example the heavy, tiled window cheeks have been removed and lime render is proposed for the dormer wall/side-cheeks. The effect of this is to make the dormer appear less 'heavy' and to give a slenderer look to the dormer. All possible efforts have been made to reduce the bulk from the previously proposed

pitched roof dormer whilst still allowing crucial access to the attic without presenting a danger to the occupants.

The unbroken roofscape of the rear elevation is large but the roof is pitched at around 45 degrees so the height from eaves to ridge is not as great as earlier roofs which were typically pitched at around 52 degrees. The recent application to reduce one rear chimney and remove one rear chimney which will assist to make this roofscape appear less broken and create a more pleasing balance with the dormer.

Historically, a tall dormer is not an unusual solution to the issue of a staircase to an attic where the stair is against an external wall. Where the elevations allow, another solution was to project a two-storey narrow extension off the building which contained a stair or create a large gabled 'dormer' from the eaves...these two possible alternate solutions are not appropriate in this situation. An example of a tall dormer at an attic stair can be seen below on a listed building in Goudhurst which starts on an outshot roof to the right of the photograph:



The above is a historic example (exaggerated by the outshot) of a rear access dormer on a grade II listed building, a former farmhouse set in a rural location.



The above is a historic example of a rear access dormer on a grade II listed building, a former farmhouse set in a rural location. This example goes from eaves-beam and close to the ridge with an outshot below the dormer.



The above is a historic example of a rear dormer on a grade II* listed building near Deal, a former farmhouse set in a rural location. This example shows the hipped tiled roof with plaster dormer side-cheeks, this is a dormer for one of the attic rooms.



Another photograph of the rendered side-cheek dormers on the grade II* listed building near Deal, a former farmhouse set in a rural location. This example shows the hipped tiled roof with plaster dormer side-cheeks.

Planning history

List of previous planning history obtained from Gravesham Borough Council planning website.

- Application for Listed building consent for the reinforcement of east masonry wall and external alterations to rear chimneys.
Ref. No: 20231172 | Status: Pending Consideration
- Application for the variation of condition 2 and 3 attached to planning reference 20230669 for the erection of a rear dormer, external repairs to render and joinery along with internal reinforcement of chimney and timber-frame structure and installation of Lightning Protection System; to allow the documents and plans to be changed for the roof tile manufacturer from Spicer tiles to Tudor tiles.
Ref. No: 20231144 | Status: Pending Consideration
- Application for the variation of condition 2 attached to planning reference 20230670 for an application for Listed building consent for the erection of a rear dormer, external repairs to render and joinery along with internal reinforcement of chimney and timber-frame structure and installation of Lightning Protection System; to allow the documents and plans to be change for the roof tile manufacturer from Spicer tiles to Tudor tiles.
Ref. No: 20231130 | Status: Pending consideration.
- Application for a non-material amendment to planning permission reference number 20230669 to allow the change of roof tile manufacturer from Spicer tiles to Tudor tiles.
Ref. No: 20231131 | Status: Application withdrawn.
- Erection of a rear dormer, external repairs to render and joinery along with internal reinforcement of chimney and timber-frame structure and installation of Lightning Protection System.

- Ref. No: 20230669 | Status: Application permitted.
- Application for Listed building consent for the erection of a rear dormer, external repairs to render and joinery along with internal reinforcement of chimney and timber-frame structure and installation of Lightning Protection System.
Ref. No: 20230670 | Status: Application permitted.
 - Construction of dormer window in the rear roof slope
Ref. No: 20020165 | Status: Application permitted.
 - Listed building consent for erection of dormer extension and 1no. conservation roof light in rear roof slope.
Ref. No: 20000367 | Status: Application permitted.
 - Change of use from residential accommodation for holiday letting to residential.
Ref. No: 20000366 | Status: Application permitted.
 - Listed building consent for the conversion of stable to a holiday home.
Ref. No: 19990073 | Status: Application permitted

DESIGN AND ACCESS CONSIDERATIONS

AMOUNT

There is no change in floor area or volume with the proposal.

LAYOUT

The existing layout of the site will remain unchanged.

SCALE

The proposal creates a slight volume increase to the dormer window of approximately 1.1m³ for the pitched roof.

LANDSCAPING

No changes are proposed to the existing landscaping.

APPEARANCE

Proposals are to change the flat roof of previously approved application ref: 20230669 & 20230670 to a pitched roof and lime plaster finish to the dormer side-cheeks. The double casement window essentially stays the same.

ACCESS

No adjustment or improvements are proposed to existing access and drive arrangements. The proposals do not impact or alter existing access arrangements.

SIGNIFICANCE

The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic.

- *Historic significance – the age and history of the asset, its development over time, the strength of its tie to a particular architectural period, the layout of a site, the plan form of a building, internal features of special character including chimneystacks and fireplaces.*

The historic significance of the building lies in its age, primarily the C17 historic core; its timber-frame and its large axial chimney with back-to-back fireplaces on the ground and first floors. Of

low significance is the front porch and front elevation joinery. Of no historic significance is the axial chimney stack above the roofline; the modern chimneys to the rear; the rear elevation extensions and joinery; rear elevation dormer window; the cementitious external render to the house.

- *Cultural significance – the role a site plays in a historic setting, village, town or landscape context, the use of a building perhaps tied to a local industry or agriculture, social connections of an original architect or owner,*

Cultural significance is moderate, the house said to be one of five houses in Nurstead (a small civil parish of Meopham consisting of around 522 acres) according to Edward Hasted survey of 1797 and is located approximately 1 mile by road from the Grade I listed Nursted Court.

Aesthetic/architectural significance – the visual qualities and characteristics of the asset (settlement site or building), long views, legibility of building form, character of elevations, roofscape, materials and fabric, special features of interest,

Its architectural significance is largely as a vernacular building, probably dating from the 17th century, it is built in local materials by local craftsmen for local people. Whilst the house retains a large proportion of its original timber-frame, the most crucial part of its construction system, it also has historic and modern extensions with modern materials and joinery. It has a relatively large unbroken roofscape of hand-made clay tiles. Even though the north elevation joinery is relatively modern, their traditional style adds to the character of the front elevation. The rear elevation has modern extensions, modern chimneys, modern dormer and modern joinery, all contribute to reduce the character of the rear elevation.

- *Archaeological significance – evolution of the asset, phases of development over different periods, important features, evidence in building fabric, potential for below ground remains*

The evidential value and potential of Nurstead Hall lies primarily in the timber-framed elements of the surviving 17th century structure. The historic core of the building well illustrates a vernacular dwelling house of its construction period.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSALS ON THE HERITAGE ASSET

The proposed dormer replaces the existing dormer on the same location, the dimensions of which remain the same and therefore no historic timbers need to be trimmed to install this dormer. This dormer is proposed to the rear of a former farmhouse located in a rural setting and on a predominately modern elevation. When based on the above criteria of significance of this elevation...aesthetic, architectural, archaeological and cultural...this elevation is of very low significance and changing from a flat roof dormer to a pitched roof dormer we are of the opinion that an alteration such as this will not harm any special interest this building holds.

CONCLUSION

No historic fabric is removed or altered by this proposal and the proposed dormer is based on a traditional dormer style that is associated with farmhouses in rural Kent. The proposed dormer replaces an existing dormer on a predominately modern elevation and does not replace any historic fabric and therefore any harm to the existing elevation character is very much less than substantial.