



BOWER COTTAGE, SOLE STREET, GRAVESEND, KENT, DA12 3AX

Written Scheme of Investigation for a programme of Historic Building Recording

Project Code: BR BCSS 22
Listed Building Ref: 20220156
Client: Mr and Mrs Saunders
NGR: TQ 65662 67614

Prepared by: Rupert Austin
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Canterbury Archaeological Trust Limited

92a Broad Street · Canterbury · Kent · CT1 2LU
+44 (0)1227 462 062 · admin@canterburytrust.co.uk · canterburytrust.co.uk
Registered Charity no: 278861 · Company Registered no: 1441517 (England)



Summary

The owners of Bower Cottage, Sole Street have been granted planning and listed building consent for alterations to the house, including new additions against its north and south walls and the conversion of the basement into habitable accommodation.

The principal objective of the proposed historic building recording and watching brief is to ensure the preservation by record of the historic building resource and fabric where it will be affected by the proposed works, resulting in alteration, permanent loss or the placement beyond easy academic study and analysis.

The present specification seeks to provide a programme and methodology for undertaking the historic building recording, setting out the objectives, the standards to be attained, the nature of the monitoring and the format for reporting.

Specification for historic building recording at Bower Cottage, Sole Street, Gravesend, Kent, DA12 3AX

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This specification sets out the requirements for a programme of Historic Building Recording, to be maintained by a recognised and competent buildings archaeologist, at Bower Cottage, Sole Street, Gravesend, Kent, DA12 3AX (NGR TQ 65662 67614).
- 1.2 Planning and listed building applications for alterations to the property were submitted to Gravesham Borough Council in February 2022. These were approved in May 2022, subject to conditions, one requiring a programme of historic building recording to be undertaken in advance of works, due to the Grade II designation of the property.
- 1.3 Condition 15 of the Listed Building consent (20220156) states:
- No development shall take place until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of building recording in accordance with a written specification and timetable which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.*
- Reason: To ensure that historic building features are properly examined and recorded in order to ensure that the works preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building in accordance with policy CS20 of the Core Strategy 2014 and saved policy TC2 of the Gravesham Local Plan 1994.*
- 1.4 The present specification seeks to provide a programme and an outline methodology for undertaking the building recording work, setting out the objectives, the standards to be attained, the nature of the monitoring and the format for reporting.
- 1.5 The principal objective of the building recording work is to ensure the preservation by record of the existing historic building resource and fabric, where the proposed works will result in alterations, permanent loss or the placing of historic fabric beyond easy academic study and analysis.
- 1.6 The proposed recording should reference the provisional analysis of the building undertaken previously by Anthony Swaine Architecture Ltd and contained in its Design and Access Statement and Historic Building Statement of Significance Report, February 2022.
- 1.7 The historic building recording should be undertaken prior to the proposed programme of works.

- 1.8 The owner and/or their agents will confirm the extent of the proposed building works with the archaeological contractor and confirm that arrangements are in place with Gravesham Borough Council.

2. Site location and designations

- 2.1 Bower Cottage, a grade II listed building, is located on a corner plot, within the village of Sole Street, in the parish of Cobham. The property stands along the west side of Sole Street, here aligned roughly north-south, at its junction with Manor Road and is bounded to the north, west and east by mostly modern, twentieth-century residential development. The Chatham Main Line, formerly the Chatham and Dover railway, passes within 35 metres to the south of the site, here running east-west.
- 2.2 Evidently, the settlement here developed, historically, in a linear but dispersed manner along the east and west sides of the road, the presence of fifteenth-century buildings here indicating occupation back into medieval times. Despite the arrival of the railway and a station in the 1860s, this settlement still comprised, by the turn of the century, a relatively small hamlet, of two dozen or so houses, surrounded by farmland and orchards.
- 2.3 This would, however, change, in the early twentieth century, when a small track or footpath, forming the north boundary of the site (the present Manor Road) was converted into a proper highway, and new housing formed along its north and south sides, all within easy reach of the station.¹
- 2.4 By the 1960s, development had commenced along the east side of the road and to the north. By the late twentieth century, the bulk of the residential housing that forms the present village appears to have been completed, around a network of new roads to the north of the railway, on each side of Sole street, the rural settings of the older properties and farmsteads here replaced with a more urban environment. The railway has, fortunately, managed to curtail any development to the south of the village, and the landscape here is still dominated by mostly open fields.
- 2.5 Two other listed buildings are located within the vicinity of the property. The most interesting appears to be Yeoman's House, a grade II listed building located just 50 metres to the north.² This house was previously owned and restored by Sir Herbert Baker, who donated the property to the National Trust in 1931. The list entry describes the building as a Wealden Hall house of late fifteenth-century date.
- 2.6 Another Grade II listed property, Sole Street House, a late eighteenth-century red brick building is located approximately 205 metres to the north-east.³ An historic

¹ The development occurs between the c1907 and c1930 *Ordnance Survey* maps.

² Listed Building Entry 1095063; HER No.TQ 66 NE 151

³ Listed Building Entry 1067728; HER No. TQ 66 NE 148.

farmstead associated with this property, now much depleted, is listed on the KCC Historic Environment Register.⁴

- 2.7 Several other heritage assets and sites of historic interest are listed in the area on the register, including St Mary's Church Room, a corrugated tin structure located directly opposite Bower Cottage on the north side of Manor Road. This was built in 1888, for the growing population around Sole Street Railway station and is described as one of the original 'Tin Tabanacles'.⁵ The site of an anti-aircraft searchlight and a park for civil defence vehicles is recorded immediately to the south of the railway.

3. The proposed scheme

- 3.1 Listed building consent was granted for the erection of a single storey extension to the south-west elevation of the house, a two storey side extension to the north-east, together with internal and external alterations including the conversion of the basement into habitable room, structural reinforcement of the unretained clay faced basement wall, removal and replacement of windows, replacement of modern brickwork with matching bricks in lime mortar, repointing of the brickwork in lime mortar, and changing the use of shower room to utility room.

4. Historic background

- 4.1 The listed building description for Bower Cottage states:

C15 or earlier. Brick and rendering externally. Tiled gabled roof. South half is low end of Wealden house with heavy joists. Hall area rebuilt C17 but enclosing C16 chimney stack. Casement windows

- 4.2 The earliest parts of the property comprise two-storeys and form an L shaped building in plan. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, a lean-to, under a catslide roof, was added to the rear of the house, creating the rectangular footprint that exists today.
- 4.3 The oldest part of the building is that forming the southern half of the structure. A medieval timber-framed is preserved within this part of the house. Surviving original features include part of a crown-post roof, a four-centred door head and an unglazed, mullioned window. This part of the building has been interpreted as a wing to a missing open-hall located to the north. Evidence that this wing was jettied to the east (front) was observed by Anthony Swaine Architecture.
- 4.4 Only a small part of the timber-frame of this wing is now visible externally, this located to the rear (west) on the first floor. The rest of its elevations have all now been rebuilt with brick.

⁴ HER No. MKE84311.

⁵ HER: TQ 66 11.

- 4.5 Anthony Swaine Architecture have questioned whether this was in fact a Wealden Hall type house, as suggested in the listed building description, proposing instead that it was a simpler, single-ended hall house.
- 4.6 Later additions include a large brick chimney, inserted up through the centre of the property, with a wide inglenook fireplace and adjoining bread oven.
- 4.7 The northern half of the property was formed later, and appears to have been brick built, rather than timber-framed. Presumably, it replaces the original open-hall.
- 4.8 Map regression analysis indicates Bower Cottage was subdivided into two dwellings in later years. Each of these was provided with its own large (approximately 63 metres long) enclosed garden, to the rear (west). The two dwellings and gardens appear to have survived down to the 1960s, at which point, the property was converted back into a single dwelling. Most of the rear gardens appear to have been sold off at this time and a new property formed on them.

5. Objectives of the historic building recording

- 5.1 The principal objective of the proposed programme of historic building recording and watching brief is to contribute to heritage knowledge of Bower Cottage and more generally Sole Street, through the recording and analysis of the historic fabric affected by the proposed works. Particular attention will be made to the character, condition, date and significance of the historic fabric.

6. Programme of recording work

- 6.1 Historic building recording will be undertaken by the archaeological contractor in advance of works.
- 6.2 The owner and/or their agents or contractors will allow the archaeological contractor reasonable time and resources to undertake any inspection or recording required.
- 6.3 Recording should be commensurate with an Historic England Level 3 survey. This is an analytical record that seeks both to record and also understand the origins and subsequent development of the fabric through an inspection of its fabric
- 6.4 A good photographic record of the interior and exterior of the building should be made, including general views as well as significant features. More detailed coverage of those areas to be affected by the works should be made – these include the north and south elevations, where additions will be formed, those extant openings in these walls that are to be adapted, and also the basement. The photographic survey should be undertaken using a good quality digital SLR camera and lenses and tripod and flash, where appropriate.
- 6.5 A brief appraisal of the building should be made, based on a visual inspection of the fabric, in order to understand the original form and subsequent development of the

building. Reference should be made to the interpretation offered by Anthony Swaine Architecture, in order to confirm, reject, refine or augment their assertions.

- 6.6 A brief written account of the observations made in the building during the programme of recording, and the evidence upon which any analysis of the buildings' original form and subsequent development has been based, should be made.
- 6.7 Readily available plans of the building should be included with the report, these annotated to show the general phasing of the building and features of interest and significance. The location of photographs should be recorded on the plans.
- 6.8 A measured survey of the timber-frame contained within the property is NOT proposed.
- 6.9 Further documentary study is NOT proposed.

7. Recording Practice

- 7.1 In addition to that specified above, the following practice is to be adhered to:
- 7.2 The historic fabric is to be recorded according to accepted professional standards.
- 7.3 A digital photographic record of significant features and fabric, and their setting, is to be kept. The photographic record is to be regarded as a key component of the historic building survey. Photographs are to be dated, numbered and include, where necessary, descriptive captions. The locations and orientation of photographs should, where appropriate, be marked on plans of the building.
- 7.4 The written report is to be an essential and integrated component of the record and should be reference to the visual and drawn record in order to aid interpretation.
- 7.5 The site archive should include all project records and cultural material produced by the project.

8. Reporting

- 8.1 On completion of the historic building recording the archaeological contractor will produce a report, copies of which are to be provide to:
 - The owner and or their agents
 - The Kent County Council Archaeological Officer
 - The Local Planning Authority

The report will contain as a minimum the following:

- A written account.
- Relevant drawings, such as plans, sections and elevations.

- Representative examples from the photographic survey.

9. General

- 9.1 The archaeological contractor is to allow the site records to be inspected and examined at any reasonable time, during or after the programme of works, by the developer, the Kent County Council Archaeological Officer or any designated representative of the Local Planning Authority.
- 9.2 In undertaking the works the archaeological contractor is to abide by:
- all statutory provisions and by-laws relating to the work in question, especially the Health and Safety at Work *etc.* Act 1974;
 - the Chartered Institute for Archaeologist's *Code of Conduct*;
 - the Chartered Institute for Archaeologist's Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology.

10. References

British Geological Survey on-line: <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists 2014 *Standard and Guidance for archaeological watching brief*

Historic England *Understanding Historic Buildings, A Guide to Good Recording Practice* 2016 Guidance notes.

Kent County Council Historic Environment Record:
<http://www.kent.gov.uk/ExploringKentsPast/advancedsearch.aspx>

National Planning Policy Framework, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, HMSO.
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/attachment_data/file/810197/NPPF_Feb_2019_revised.pdf

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