15th July 2014

Agenda Item: 8

Asset and Enterprise Committee

Old House

Report of: *Adrian J Tidbury, Estates and Valuation Surveyor*

Wards Affected: *Brentwood North*

This report is: *Public (Appendix A & B are classified as exempt, under Paragraph 4 of Schedule 12A if the Local Government Act 1972 and this will not be available for public viewing due to commercial sensitivity).*

1. Executive Summary

1.1 This report acknowledges the bids received through the marketing of the property and to reconsider the future development of the site.

1.2 Relevant past reports:-

28th February 2012 min 516, Asset, Localism and Infrastructure Panel
27th September 2012 min 212, Asset, Localism and Infrastructure Panel
21st November 2012 min 308, Asset, Localism and Infrastructure Panel
23rd January 2013 min 416, Asset Panel
13th March 2013 min 520 Policy, Projects and Resources Board

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1 Members are asked to acknowledge the range of bids received for the property, the anticipated costs for redevelopment of the property into flats as an entrepreneurial approach to receiving revenue income to the Council and reconsider the decision of the 13th March Policy, Projects and Resources Board.

2.2 Should Members resolve to proceed with the redevelopment of the property, a report to Full Council will be required to consider the financial implications for the Capital Programme.

3. Introduction and Background

3.1 Members will be aware of the history to this town centre property of 800m^2 of gross internal floor space with limited parking to the rear. The building, documented from 1748, originally forming two houses later joined together between 1872 and 1896 and more recently used as a community centre. The building is currently unoccupied. A full report on the property was made to the Asset, Infrastructure and Localism Panel in 28th February 2012 which gave full details of the history and background of the site, an update on its condition at the time, the legal position and constraints.

3.2 The condition of the property as reported to the 28th February 2012 Asset, Infrastructure and Localism Panel has deteriorated further with significant deterioration in the timber lintels to the upper floor windows which will require renovation work in the foreseeable future. Whilst the ivy to the front of the property has been cut back, it continues to deform the facing brickwork and enter into the building. English Heritage have advised not to remove the ivy until renovation works to the property commence.

3.3 The property is still subject to a 5 year lease dated 11th June 2011 to the Brentwood Leisure Trust although a Deed of Surrender has been signed but not yet enacted.

3.4 The building is Grade II* listed and is therefore protected from demolition or alterations affecting the internal and external envelopes of the building and statutory consents will need to be obtained for residential use.

3.5 Members will recall that Purcell Architects were commissioned to undertake a feasibility study into converting Old House into apartments and Improvement East were commissioned to carry out a review of the Councils existing capability in asset management, the results from this work was reported fully to the 23rd January 2013 Asset Panel.

3.6 As a result of the decision of the 13th March 2013 Policy, Projects and Resources Board the site was marketed. The outcome of this was reported to the 9th October 2013 Performance and Resources Board and the recommendation was that the Committee accepts the bid from the chosen bidder subject to its agreement of deliverability, taking into account the fabric of the heritage asset. However, the proposed purchaser advised the Council in March 2014 that they were no longer able to proceed with the proposed purchase of the property.

3.7 The property has been put back on the market and the Council's Agents on 30th June 2014 have advised the Council that 10 bids have been received for the property.

4. Issue, Options and Analysis of Options

4.1 A number of bids have been received. This information is commercially sensitive, the detailed bids are contained in the exempt Appendix.

4.2 Advice has been sought from a contractor experienced in dealing with such sensitive properties to determine the likely costs of refurbishing and reconfiguring the building into flats. This information can be obtained from the confidential papers.

4.3 Members will recall the consideration of the report by Purcell Architects that some comment was made by English Heritage on the proposed in that they had no "in principle" objection to the conversion to residential units but until a detailed survey is carried out it is not possible to determine how many units that would be.

5. Reasons for Recommendation

5.1 The review of the original decision to dispose of the property will enable the Council to reconsider the potential revenue income that this asset has the potential to return.

6. Consultation

6.1 No public consultation has been carried in conjunction with this report.

7. References to Corporate Plan

7.1 Value for Money: policies that invest in key services to create opportunity for all, provide better value for Brentwood's taxpayers and enhance the borough's infrastructure whilst modernising and transforming Brentwood Borough Council. We will re-prioritise and focus our resources and be innovative in our approach.

7.2 Our Borough: Policies which promote our environment, support sustainable growth, and safeguard our high quality environment including heritage and countryside. We will provide responsive, accessible and forward thinking services for vulnerable residents, supporting people back into work and providing good quality housing making Brentwood our residents' Borough of Choice.

8. Implications

Financial Implications
Name & Title: Jo-Anne Ireland, Acting Chief Executive
Tel & Email: 01277 312712 / jo-anne.ireland@brentwood.gov.uk

8.1 The Capital Programme for 2014/15 assumed a receipt from the sale of this (and other) assets. Should this not materialise, the Council would need to consider the financial implications of any new borrowing requirement to fund the Capital Programme, in addition to any additional funds required to renovate the property.

Legal Implications
Name & Title: Alison Stuart, Acting Head of Legal
Tel & Email: 01277 312 774/alison.stuart@brentwood.gov.uk

8.2 Legal advice should be sought throughout the process to ensure that due process and transparency is achieved

9. Background Papers (include their location and identify whether any are exempt or protected by copyright)

9.1 28th February 2012 Min 516 Asset, Localism and Infrastructure Panel
27th September 2012 min 212 Asset, Localism and Infrastructure Panel
21st November 2012 min 308 Asset, Localism and Infrastructure Panel
23rd January 2013 min 416 Asset Panel
13th March 2013 min 520 Policy, projects and Resources Board

10. Appendices to this report

Appendix A – Report from Asset, Localism and Infrastructure Panel on 28th February 2012.

Exempt Appendices

Appendix B - Overview of viability assessment

Appendix C - Schedule of bids received

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BRENTWOOD BOROUGH COUNCIL

Committee:	Asset, Infrastructure and Localism Panel
Place:	Council Chamber
Date:	Tuesday 28th February 2012
Time:	7:00pm
Co-ordinator:	Mrs J Sharp, Committee Co-ordinator, Ext 2655

Please note this meeting will be subject to a Webcast broadcast live on the Internet.

To: Cllrs Quirk (Chairman), Baker (Vice-Chairman), Aspinell, Mrs Cornell, Ms Golding, Golding, Mrs Henwood, Hirst, Kendall, MacLellan and Sleep

Nominated substitutes: Cllrs Mynott, Dr Naylor and Tee

Co-opted representatives: Cllrs Ms Wheeler (Blackmore, Hook End and Wyatts Green Parish Council), Smith (Doddinghurst Parish Council), Marsh (Herongate and Ingrave Parish Council), Davey (Ingatestone and Fryerning Parish Council), Saunders (Kelvedon Hatch Parish Council), Ms Stacey (Mountnessing Parish Council), Representative of Navestock Parish Council, Pratt (Stondon Massey Parish Council) and Crowley (West Horndon Parish Council)

Members are respectfully summoned to attend the above meeting to transact the business set out below.

Chief Executive

Agenda

Part One

Items which, in the opinion of the Chief Executive, will be considered with the public present at the meeting. Details of background documents relied upon in the reports before the Committee are attached as an Appendix to the Agenda.

7. THE OLD HOUSE
(Appendices 6 and 7)

PURPOSE OF REPORT		To seek Members' views about the future of the Old House.
CORPORATE OBJECTIVES		**Value for Money**: *Policies that invest in key services to create opportunity for all, provide better value for Brentwood's taxpayers and enhance the borough's infrastructure whilst modernising and transforming Brentwood Borough Council. We will re-prioritise and focus our resources and be innovative in our approach.* **Our Borough**: *Policies which promote our environment, support sustainable growth, and safeguard our high quality environment including heritage and countryside. We will provide responsive, accessible and forward thinking services for vulnerable residents, supporting people back into work and providing good quality housing making Brentwood our residents' Borough of Choice*.
IMPLICATIONS		
•	**Legal**	Any legal constraints in relation to title to the land are set out in the report.
•	**Finance**	Budgetary provision is being made for bringing in the expertise we need to pursue these proposals. Disposal costs would be in the region of 1% of the sale price.
•	**Staff**	We need to develop an intelligent client function in the Council to manage the asset programme.
•	**Risk Management**	Limited. Increased risks if the Council decide to redevelop the property itself.
•	**Asset Management**	Proposals are in line with the Asset management Strategy.
	Health & Safety	No implications.
	Equality and Diversity	No implications.
ACTION REQUIRED		Members views are requested regarding the future of the site.

Location

The location of the site is shown hatched in black on the plan attached as Appendix 6.

The property is located on the eastern periphery of Brentwood Town Centre lying close to the intersection of A129 and A128. The former connects with the M25 motorway/A12 at the Brook Street Roundabout (Junction 28) approximately 2 miles to the west of the property. The availability of public transport is also good with Brentwood and Shenfield mainline rail services being approximately 0.66 and 1.5 miles distant respectively. Frequent Local bus services are available in Brentwood town centre and on Shenfield Road.

The site is located in a prominent area of Brentwood town centre at Wilsons Corner which is the gateway to the town's High Street from the east. Properties to the south of Shenfield Road are occupied by Brentwood School for education purposes and the corner plot is occupied by refurbished retail units at ground floor with two storeys of office above.

To the rear of the site is the six storey former BT Exchange building which dominates the immediate surroundings

The site is broadly rectangular in shape and extends approximately to 0.066 hectares (0.163 acres) and accommodates approximately 800 m2 of Gross Internal floorspace. The plot width and depth are approximately 22 metres and 30 metres respectively.

The building's immediate neighbours are 3 storey offices (B1) (mansard roof extension) to the east of the site which appears to run the depth of the plot dropping down to single storey height at the rear. Two storey retail properties lie to the west with a small service area for these properties bordering the western boundary. These properties are occupied by a mixture of local operators and represent a secondary position.

Old House was formerly a part of Brentwood School but came in to Local Authority ownership during 20th Century. The building is faced in red brick with a mixture of slate and tile roofs and timber sash windows.

To the rear of the property is a small parking area with capacity for approximately 10 cars.

History and background of the site

Originally Old House was two houses which were later joined together. The 'Old House' was for a time used as part of Brentwood School and later as community centre (1973). Now not in use, it is leased to Brentwood Leisure Trust.

Said to be documented from 1748, Old House is grade II* listed and is within the Brentwood Conservation Area. The distinct façades, one flat and one with bay windows, both south facing, indicate the originally separate houses which were converted into a single building between 1872 and 1896 on the evidence of early Ordnance Survey maps. There have been later additions to the property.

The Old House is one of a group of Georgian brick houses on the Shenfield Road which make for an attractive northern approach to the Brentwood Conservation Area. The creeper on the building, a longstanding feature of the street scene, covers many of the windows of the Shenfield Road façade. There is evidence inside the eastern range of the building of a late medieval timber frame. The list description also refers to evidence for a medieval phase of the building. The top of the chimney looks rebuilt externally, but inside the roof void the brickwork is 17th century and contemporary with the roof. The house was altered and refaced in the 18th century, and then altered again when the two buildings were connected.

The western building is later in date than the eastern part of the house. It is taller, and its external walls are of brick. The rounded bay on the front of the building is a later addition as it interrupts the wooden cornice on the front of the house. The existence of the cornice

indicates that originally the house had a pitched roof with the cornice at the eaves. When the bay was added, a higher parapet roof was formed. The windows in the bay have recessed reveals, whereas those in the front of the house, and also in the façade of the eastern part, are flush with the brickwork, a practice outlawed by legislation from 1709.

The rear brick elevation with its curved bay is also a later addition, apparently contemporary with the bay on the front. The sash windows here too are recessed. Furthermore, the bay is under a flat roof which runs back to the mansard roof of the main building. A large boxed in beam in Middle II Room, beneath the line of the edge of this roof, represents the top plate on which the rafters of the rear mansard roof rest, and beyond which the house was extended northwards into the bay.

The evidence of early Ordnance Survey maps indicates that the canted bay on the front of the house was built between 1872 and 1896, the same period in which the two buildings were joined together.

Internally there have been many alterations and much of the structure of the buildings is concealed. The western building appears to have undergone a refurbishment in the Regency period when as well as the front and rear bows the Regency style staircase of this building was.

There is a 20th century single storey flat roofed extension to the rear of the eastern range. This modern extension has been built incorporating an older Flemish bond boundary wall in its western elevation.

Condition of the property

A conservation report was undertaken on Old House and its findings were that the recent theft of lead from the roof has caused water to enter parts of the first floor and has led to an outbreak of mould growth. This will require roof repairs, stripping out of damaged finishes, and a period of drying time before reinstatement. There is also a damp area on the wall of room 6 on the ground floor, the cause of which is unclear. Repairs have been carried out at roof level, but also need to be carried out internally as a matter of urgency.

This damage apart, the house seems structurally sound. The mansard roofs of the later building have been re-laid relatively recently. The suspended floor beneath the hall and room 6 has also been renewed. The existence of boxed in beams implies that the timber frame and joists have been extensively reinforced with steel. There was no obvious trace of rising damp. The cellar is dry. However, wall surfaces are covered up by paper and it could be that there are faults which are concealed. The older eastern part of the house has a solid floor and its walls were, and probably still are, timber framed. A structure of this type has the potential to suffer from damp being forced into the walls if they do not have a damp proof membrane designed to work effectively with that of the floor, though no evidence of this was noted. There is a very slight bow in the façade of the older eastern part of the house, which may indicate lack of cohesion between two skins of brickwork or between brickwork and a timber frame. This does not look serious, but it might be advisable to seek advice from a structural engineer accredited in conservation.

The creeper growing externally has been allowed to get out of control, and is forcing its way through windows and blocking parapet gutters. The creeper is attractive and has

been part of the street scene for 50 years or more. But if it is to remain, it should be cut back and confined to localised areas of the façade, and trimmed once or twice a year.

There was a structural survey carried out recently and the results of this are attached as an annex to the report as Appendix 7.

The legal position

There are no restrictions detailed on the title but the land does have rights reserved over part of it reserved by the then vendor (Post Office) and any successors in title with or without vehicles for maintaining fuel storage tanks on vendor's property. The land would be sold subject to these reserved rights and reservations.

The hall is currently leased to Brentwood Leisure Trust (BLT). The lease is subject to termination on 6 month's notice. The lease is dated 6th June 2011 for a period of 5 years with the yearly rent of £1. There is Service Level Agreement with BLT that realises an income for the Council of 70% of the income above £100,000 for all the halls forming part of the SLA.

Constraints (including planning position)

The building is grade II* listed and is therefore protected from demolition or alterations affecting the internal and external envelopes of the building.

The building is currently vacant. It is understood that that community activities and meetings took place within the property in the recent past and the property is assumed to have an extant use falling within Class D1(non residential institution) of the schedule to Use Classes Order. There are, therefore, permitted development rights to use the building for the following purposes: Clinic, health centre, crèche, day nurseries, consulting rooms, Museum, public hall, library, art gallery, exhibition hall, Non - residential education and training centre. Planning have indicated that Office/residential use might be the most appropriate. Should there be a desire to see residential development of this site, this would need consideration by the Policy and Resources Board as to its allocation in the Local Plan.

The property is on the periphery of the shopping area and is allocated in the Local Plan as a community use. Policy LT8 provisions require that new proposed uses should meet community needs or alternatively that adequate reprovision or redundancy is demonstrated to move away from such purposes. In such cases, LT8 indicates that residential development would be the preferred use, although for this property its town centre location could point to a number or mix of alternative uses in accordance with policies TC3 and TC4 and indeed it has been indicated by the LPA that active ground floor uses in principle may in practice be preferred by the planning authority in this location.

Options for the future of the site

A conservation report on the property was undertaken and its findings were that the Old House is a building judged to be of national importance, being listed grade II*. Government guidance (PPS5, *Planning for the historic environment*) requires the significance of listed buildings, or heritage assets, to be assessed when contemplating

carrying out works to them. Significance can be seen as derived from the heritage values attached to a place or building, these being defined as evidential, communal, historic, and aesthetic (English Heritage, *Conservation principles*).

The Old House makes a positive and valuable contribution to the street scene in Shenfield Road, and is one of several handsome 18th-century brick-fronted houses in this part of the town at the entrance to the Conservation Area. Like others in this group, it incorporates an altogether older house, which forms the eastern part of the present building. As such, it represents evidence for the prosperity of Brentwood as a market town with coaching inns on the main London Road, and the gentrification of older buildings and plots. Its detailed history has not become clear from a rapid investigation in the Essex Record Office. As a landmark on the main road, and in its recent role as a community centre, it will be familiar to many people and hence of high communal value.

As to the architectural interest or aesthetic value of the house, the following important features can be identified:

- The timber frame of the older eastern part
- The high quality Georgian brickwork
- The façade to the Shenfield Road, that part of the building most readily appreciated by the public
- The six flue concertina stack that rises from the eastern part of the house
- The sash windows, as essential feature of the design of the façade, and their internal shutters.
- The main staircase
- Surviving old internal decoration, confined to the dado panelling and a fragment of an original cornice
- The well preserved cellar
- Of the internal plan, the rooms opening into the projecting bays, and the Recital Room, are important spaces that give some idea of the original elegance of the interior

The conservation report recommends that all the features highlighted above should be retained and preserved substantially unaltered. The extent of modernisation and rebuilding inside the house, and the impact of institutional uses, is such that the interiors are not particularly sensitive and there would therefore be relative freedom of action in adapting it to new uses, subject to obtaining listed building consent for any alterations. Relatively little old plaster seems to survive, original cornices and mouldings, doors and skirtings, are largely absent. The modern extensions, partitions and internal finishes are of no architectural or historic interest, and could be altered with relative freedom. It should however be noted that without opening up, it is often unclear what walls are made of and whether they are old or modern.

The Old House would most simply accommodate office or institutional uses, in line with how it has been used historically, and to which it is already adapted. It is also capable of community use, retail/office use or residential conversion.

Listed building consent is not required for like-for-like repairs, but is for alterations, which may include the use of similar but not identical materials. Since the Old House is listed grade II*, English Heritage would have to be consulted on a listed building application.

Because Brentwood is a planning authority, any application made by the Council for listed building consent would have to go to the Secretary of State.

The Council has already made a decision to dispose of the site and work on this has commenced but has recently been put on hold pending Members giving further consideration to this matter including the possibility of the Council maintaining ownership of the site and redeveloping it. We have invited local builders to visit the property to give an estimate of the costs of repair. Initial estimates we have received put the figure at around £850,000 - £1,000,000 to refurbish as 5 flats

There will be additional risks involved in the Council keeping ownership of the building including:

- Ability to obtain planning permission for a residential use
- Costs of repair, given that this is a listed building – many of the issues may not become apparent until work starts on the building and it may become much more expensive than originally anticipated
- Costs of conversion – as above
- The need for consent to works if they affect the listed building and the risk of incurring liabilities should the contractor undertake unauthorised works
- Ongoing liability as owner of the building (although some of the repairing obligations could be passed to occupiers)
- Failure to secure a capital receipt for its disposal

Benefits of this approach would however be:

- Maintenance of the building in public ownership
- Control over the repair and conversion
- Establishment of new units of accommodation
- Income which could be re-invested in service delivery. Flats would be likely to generate approximately £1250 per month in this location. The issue identified in the Asset Strategy about utilisation of income and the impact of the HRA is still being worked through.
- Enhanced capital value

Current interest

Expressions of interest in the property have already been received from a local firm seeking it for office use and from Brentwood School who are interested in it for teacher's accommodation. The school have already undertaken the successful conversion of a residential building on Shenfield Road into teacher accommodation and are very interested in acquiring the property.

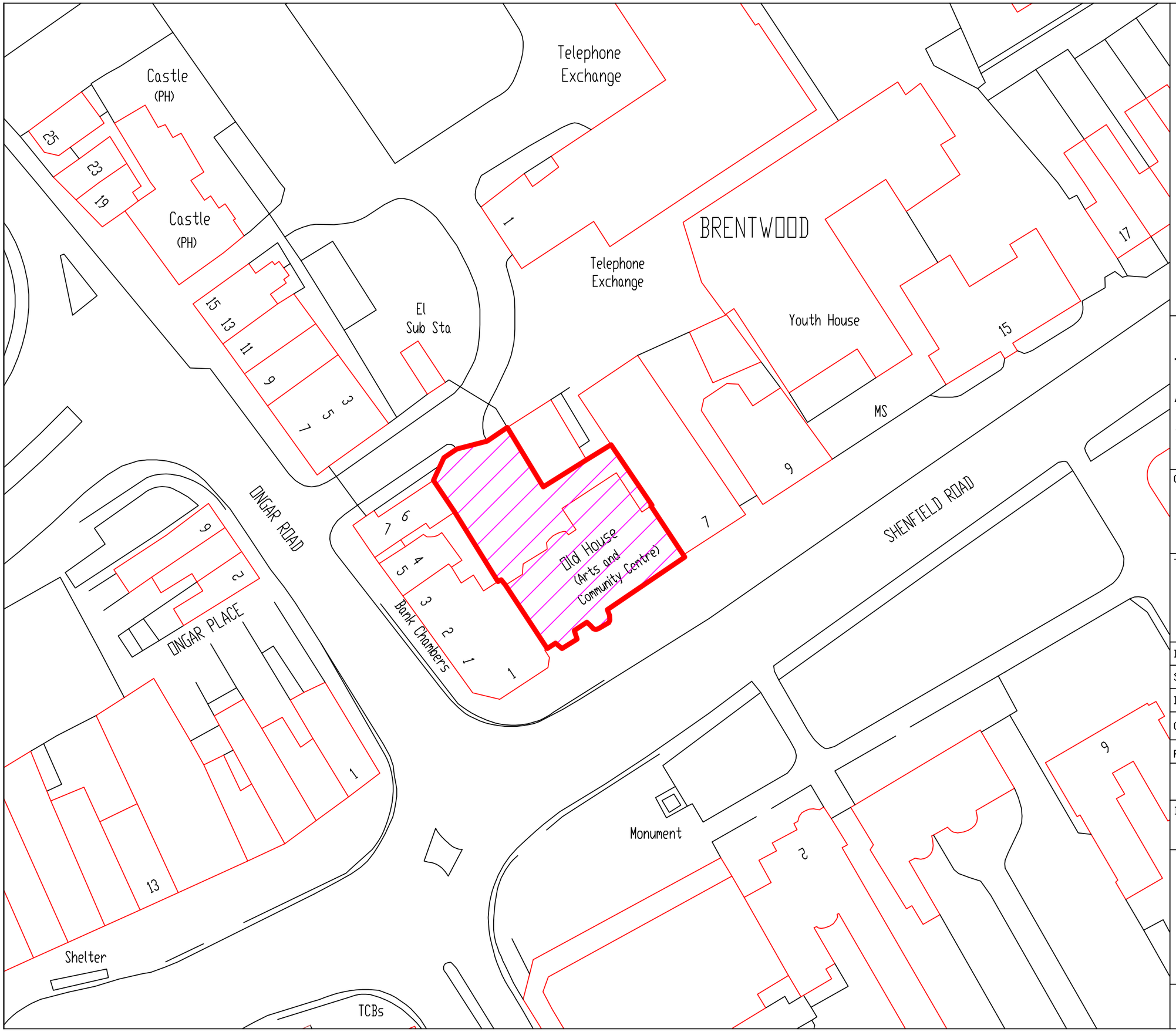
RECOMMENDED that :

1. Member's views are sought on whether to implement the previous Council decision to dispose of the property or to keep hold of it and redevelop it. A business case would need

to be developed if Members were minded to retain ownership, identifying costs, potential income and risks. Given the previous decision to dispose of the property, this will need to be a recommendation to Policy and Resources Board.

2. Notice is given to Brentwood Leisure Trust at the appropriate time to terminate their lease of the building.

DECIDED**:**



NOTES

Technical

Adrian Tidbury

Asset and Technical Manager

Contract

Old House
Shenfield Road

Title

Location and Curtilage

Drawn By	AJT
Scale	1;500
Date	Jan 2012
Checked	
Revisions	

Drawing No.

T/AJT/3769

Brentwood
Borough Council

Town Hall
Ingrave Road
Brentwood
Essex
CM15 8AY
Tel: 01277 312500

EssexWorks.
For a better quality of life

The Essex Design Initiative

The Old House, Brentwood

Conservation Statement

Brentwood Borough Council

Essex County Council

Front cover: Old House, Shenfield Road elevation

This report has been prepared by Kieran Kintrea, David Andrews and Paul Skeet of Essex County Council's Historic Buildings and Conservation team for Brentwood Borough Council.

November 2010

Table of Contents

Table of Figures

1 Introduction

Originally two houses which were later joined together, the ‘Old House’ was for a time used as part of Brentwood School and later as community centre (1973). Now not in use, it has passed to the care of Brentwood Leisure Trust.

Said to be documented from 1748, Old House is grade II* listed and is within the Brentwood Conservation Area. The distinct façades, one flat and one with bay windows, both south facing, indicate the originally separate houses which were converted into a single building between 1872 and 1896 on the evidence of early Ordnance Survey maps.

The Old House is one of a group of Georgian brick houses on the Shenfield Road which make for an attractive northern approach to the Brentwood Conservation Area. The creeper on the building, a longstanding feature of the street scene, covers many of the windows of the Shenfield Road façade.

Floor plans have been included below that identify the phases of construction throughout the building. During inspection much of the structure was concealed behind decoration and this has made the dating of individual partitions difficult, and therefore these have not been indicated on the floor plan.

2 Phases of construction

There is evidence inside the eastern range of the building of a late medieval timber frame. The first floor joists which are laid flat are approximately 5 inches (125mm) in width, seen in Room 7 (Office). The list description also refers to evidence for a medieval phase of the building. However, little of this framing can be seen, and it may be that it is contemporary with the joggled butt purlin roof structure and large six shaft chimney stack of this eastern range of the building which probably dates from the late 16th or early 17th century. The top of the chimney looks rebuilt externally, but inside the roof void the brickwork is 17th century and contemporary with the roof. The position of the chimney stack suggests the house had a lobby entry plan. The stair tower was built on to the back probably soon after. Within the stair tower on the ground floor there is an outshot with a catslide roof, this area includes the kitchen. The house was altered and refaced in the 18th century, and then altered again when the two buildings were connected.

The western building is later in date than the eastern part of the house. It is taller, and its external walls are of brick. The rounded bay on the front of the building is a later addition as it interrupts the wooden cornice on the front of the house. The existence of the cornice indicates that originally the house had a pitched roof with the cornice at the eaves. When the bay was added, a higher parapet roof was formed. The windows in the bay have recessed reveals, whereas those in the front of the house, and also in the façade of the eastern part, are flush with the brickwork, a practice outlawed by legislation from 1709.

The rear brick elevation with its curved bay is also a later addition, apparently contemporary with the bay on the front. The sash windows here too are recessed. Furthermore, the bay is under a flat roof which runs back to the mansard roof of the main building. A large boxed in beam in Middle II Room, beneath the line of the edge of this roof, represents the top plate on

which the rafters of the rear mansard roof rest, and beyond which the house was extended northwards into the bay.

The evidence of early Ordnance Survey maps indicates that the canted bay on the front of the house was built between 1872 and 1896, the same period in which the two buildings were joined together.

Internally there have been many alterations and much of the structure of the buildings is concealed, making accurate phasing of the building interior difficult. The western building appears to have undergone a refurbishment in the Regency period when as well as the front and rear bows the Regency style staircase of this building was. The flat reeded cornice in the upper recital room and in the curved bay is also a Regency feature.

There is a 20th century single storey flat roofed extension to the rear of the eastern range. This modern extension has been built incorporating an older Flemish bond boundary wall in its western elevation.

Figure 1: 1st Edition Ordnance Survey map – 1872 – Buildings shown as separate with no canted bay

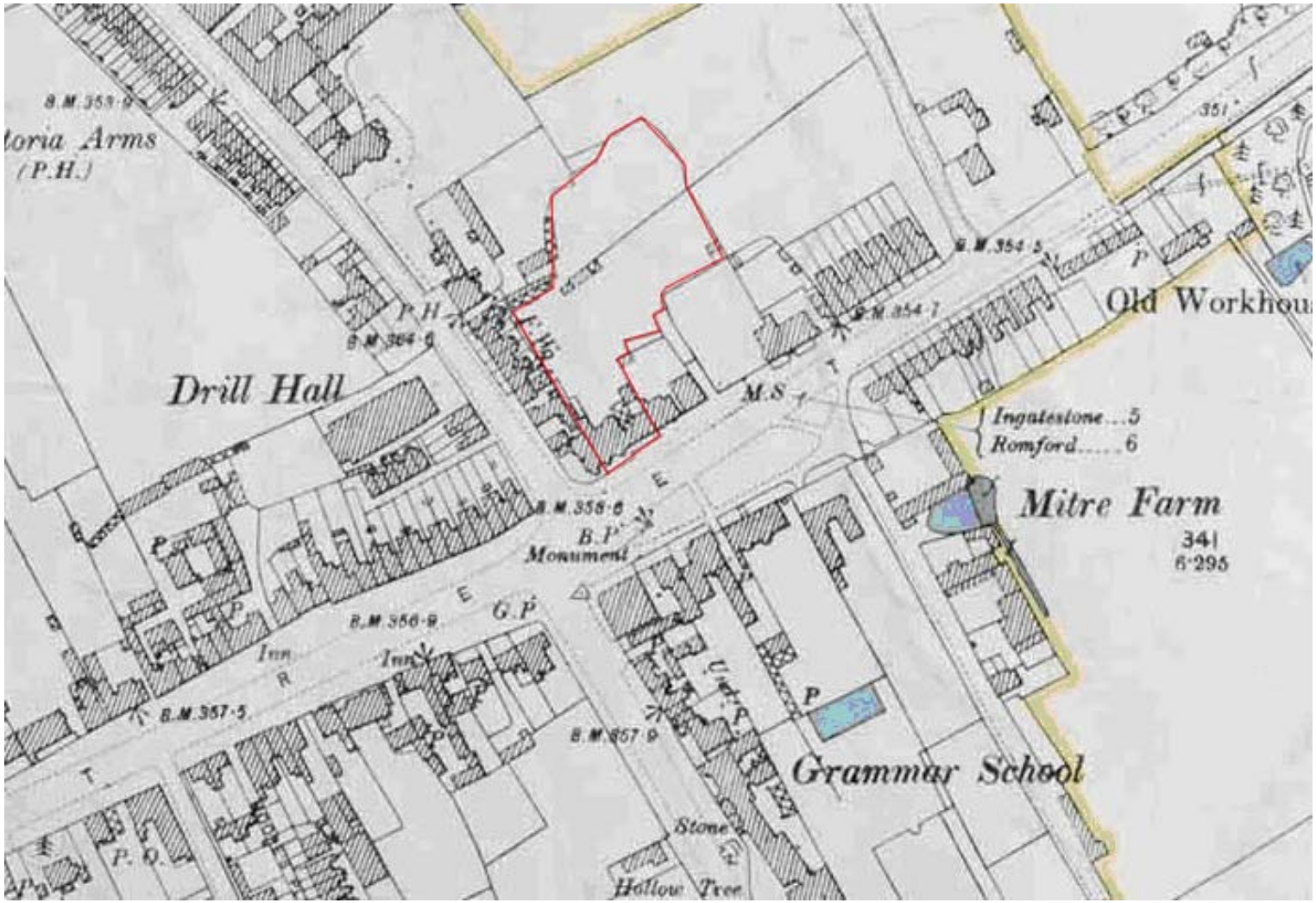


Figure 2: 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey map – 1896 – Two buildings shown as joined together with canted bay added

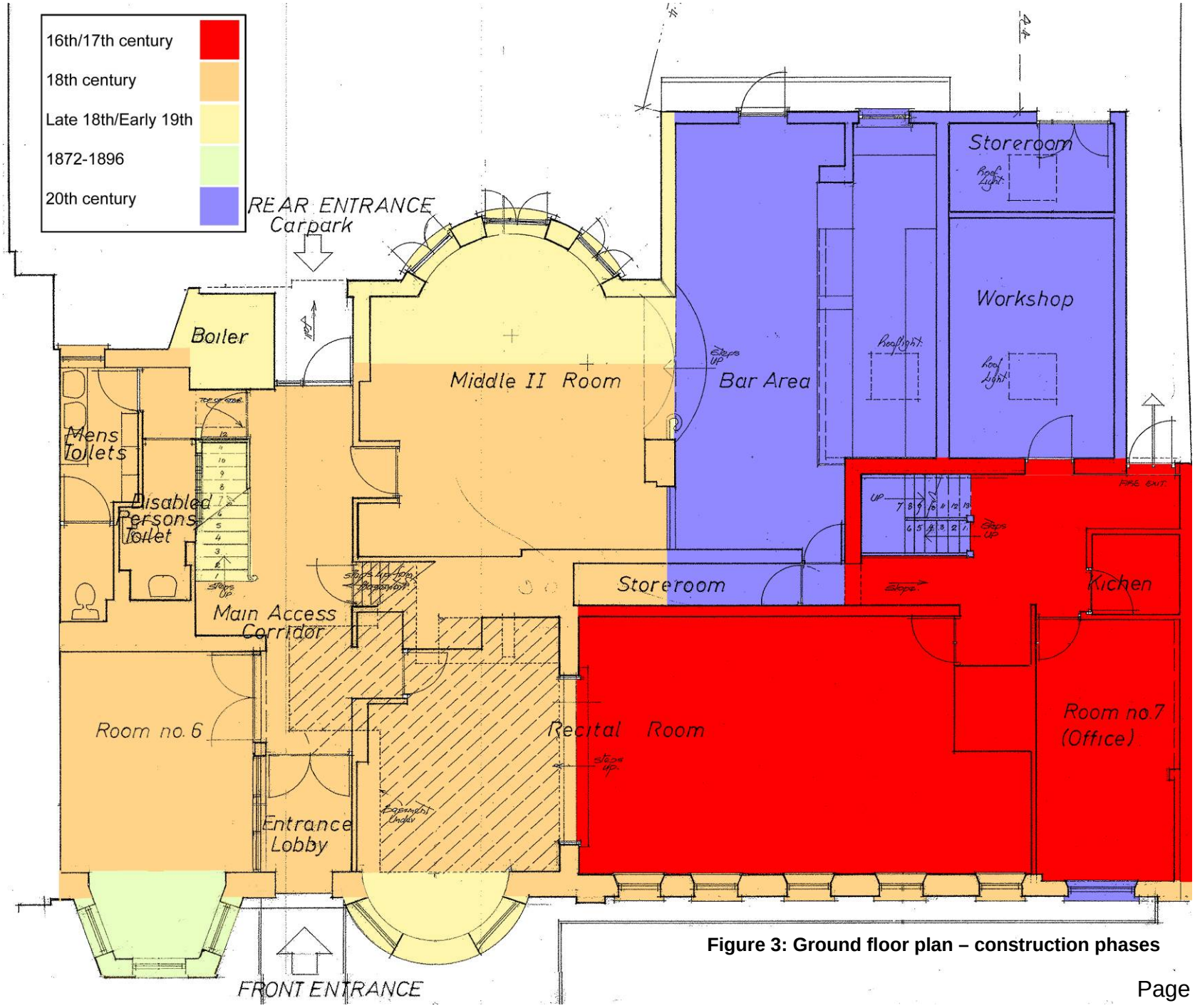


Figure 3: Ground floor plan – construction phases

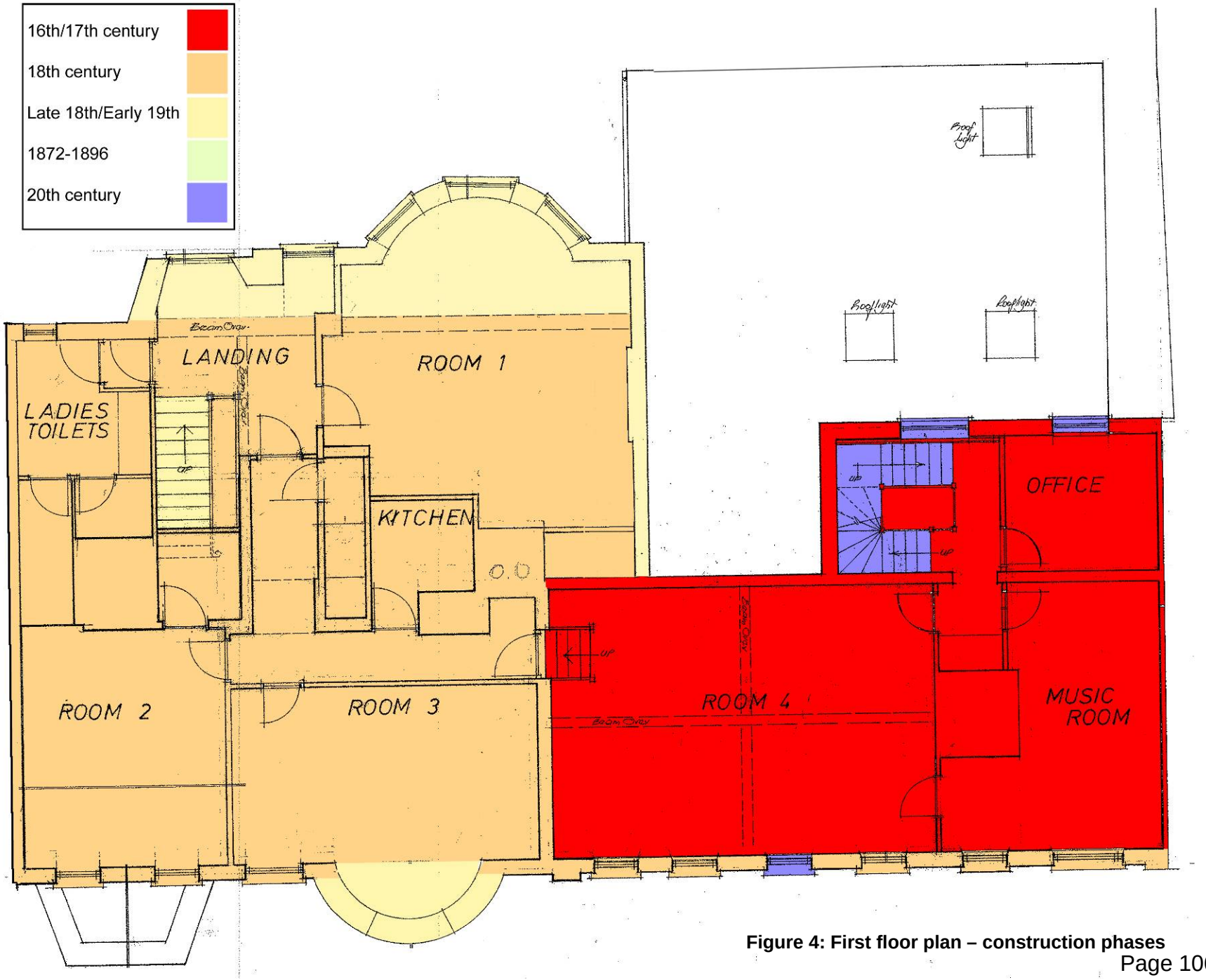


Figure 4: First floor plan – construction phases

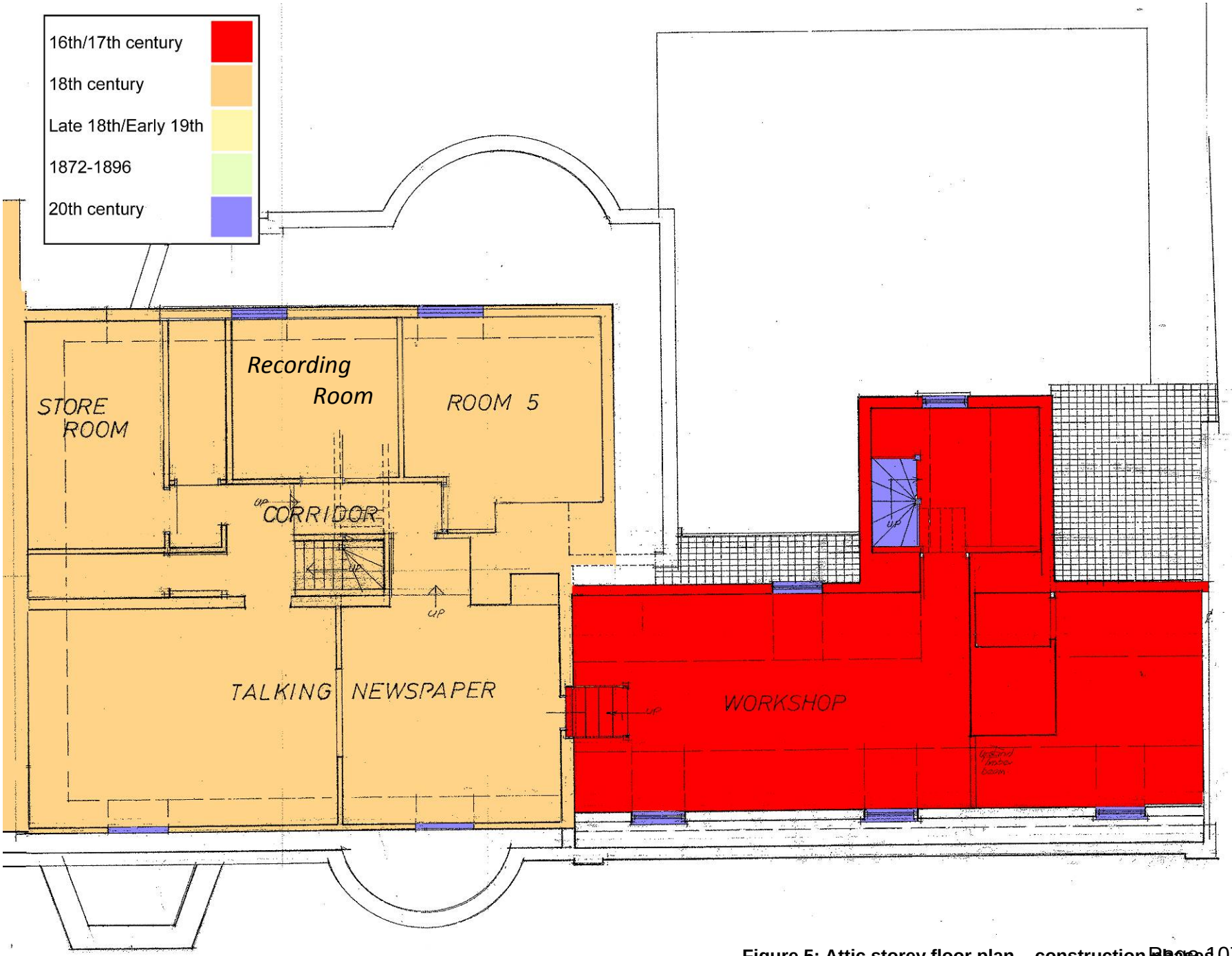


Figure 5: Attic storey floor plan – construction phases

Shenfield Road elevation

3 Exterior

3.1 Façade (East)

The eastern façade is of six window bays with brick end pilasters, a shaped brick cornice, stone capped parapet, a string course between storeys and sash windows with rubbed brick lintels and brick keystones. This brickwork encases a timber framed building of 16th/17th century origin. The façade rises to a parapet in front of a roof of handmade clay peg tiles. The top of the large six shaft stack looks rebuilt although it dates from the 16th or 17th century.

The first floor window of the second bay from the east breaks forward slightly as stated in the buildings list description. The buildings list description states that a door has been skilfully replaced by a window in this second bay, and although this would have been the natural entrance to a lobby entry building no evidence can be seen for this in the brickwork surrounding the window as the queen closers, which would be expected to present to ground level, stop at the height of the current window sill.

The windows are all flush framed with 6 over 6 sashes except on the final eastern bay, which are 8 over 8. There are three flat roof dormer windows, two with casements of twelve lights and one sash of 6 over 6.

Much of this façade is now concealed by creeper making inspection and recording difficult. There is evidence of penny struck pointing to the brickwork.

Shenfield road façade (east)

Rubbed brick lintel and keystone

3.2 Façade (West)

The western 18th century façade is taller with a slate covered mansard roof, wooden cornice (interrupted by the curved bay) and parapet. Both the single storey canted bay and the full height curved bay are later additions, the canted bay being added between 1872 and 1896, possibly when the buildings were joined.

The front door has a semicircular fanlight and cornice hood above.

The windows are all 6 over 6 panes with the exception of the first floor window in the curved bay which is 8 over 8. Apart from the curved bay windows which have recessed frames, all the windows on this elevation have their frames flush with the brickwork.

There are two dormer windows in the mansard roof which are both casements of twelve lights.

Shenfield Road elevation – Top: 2008

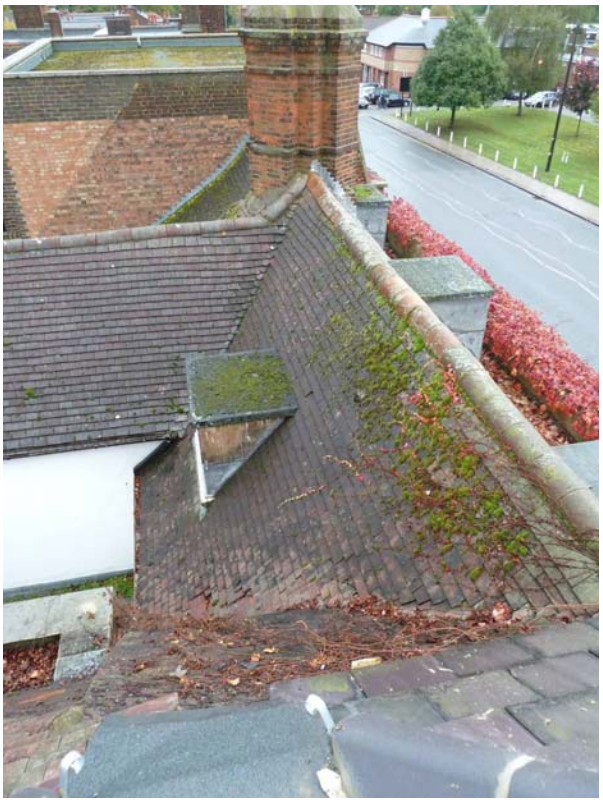
Bottom: 1990

3.3 Roof Plan

The eastern part of the building has a peg tiled pitched roof of joggled butt purlin construction, with a gabled stair tower projecting from the rear. The stair tower roof structure cannot be seen internally but is thought to be of clasped purlin or collar rafter construction given the ceiling heights on the second floor.

The western part of the building has two slate covered mansard roofs with a valley between, and a small flat roof between the rear mansard and the rear brick elevation. The rear mansard has peg tile covering to its eastern pitch. The mansard roofs are both made of 19th century mechanically sawn softwood timber, with ridge pieces and softwood boards laid over the rafters. There is a modern breathable felt indicating that they have been re-laid fairly recently.

There is a large diagonally clustered 6 shaft stack above the second window from the east of the eastern range. The top of this stack looks rebuilt at the top although it is an original 17th century stack. There is also a brick stack rising from the rear mansard.



Left: Peg tile roof of eastern building.

Right: Valley between mansard roofs of western building

3.4 Rear Elevation (East)

This elevation is rendered and much of it is concealed by the 20th century single storey extension. The gabled stair tower can be seen in line with the large chimney stack. It has a 20th century casement (12 lights) at first floor level and a fixed light in the gable.

Modern single storey extension to rear of gabled stair tower

3.5 Rear Elevation (West)

This elevation mirrors the southern façade with a curved bay like that on the front. A flat roof behind the parapet then runs back to meet the rear slate covered mansard roof where there are three dormer windows with glazing bars, one of four lights, one of six and one of eight.

All of the windows have recessed frames and are 6 over 6 sashes except the westernmost sash which is 8 over 8.

The ground floor of the curved bay has three full height side opening casements or French windows, each of four panes. These may have replaced full height sash windows; although no evidence for sash boxes can be seen.

As with the front elevation penny struck pointing, flared headers and queen closers are present in this brickwork.

Modern extension and stair tower (left) with curved bay of western rear elevation.

Penny struck pointing, flared headers and queen closers to both front and rear elevations

4 Interior

4.1 Ground Floor, Western building

Entrance Lobby

The old four panelled front door has been repaired at the bottom and has a semi circular fanlight above. The lobby has a moulded skirting board and there is a modern glazed screen between the entrance lobby and Room no. 6.

Main Access Corridor

The main access corridor contains a late 18th - early 19th century staircase with moulded open string, slender balusters, mahogany handrail and a ground floor newel post which is reeded and has Egyptian leaf decoration.

Left: Four panelled front door with fanlight

Top right: Newel post, balusters and moulded open string of late 18th/early 19th century stair

Bottom right: Detail of moulded open string of stair

Room no.6

Room 6 is accessed by modern double doors leading off the main access corridor and separated from the entrance lobby by a modern glazed screen. The 19th century canted bay of the façade has been used to extend this room.

The three sash windows in the canted bay have been constructed with horns, a method of strengthening the joints of the windows used from around 1875, a date consistent with the addition of the canted bay between 1872 and 1896.

Along with the sash windows the only other historically significant feature of this room is the moulded skirting board. As with other areas of the building it is not known if this room contains old plaster as much is concealed behind modern decoration, in this case woodchip wallpaper.

There is evidence of damp to the north west corner of the room.

Middle II Room

Within the curved boy there are three full height side opening casements or French windows with moulded soffits and shutters. There is an opening light in both the left and the right-hand casements. These French windows are thought to have replaced earlier sashes, although no evidence of sash boxes can be seen.

Middle II Room has an original moulded skirting board and modern cornicing throughout.

Left: Room 6 interior looking towards canted bay

Right: Middle II Room – French windows within curved bay

Toilets

Not seen

Recital Room

The Recital Room has a split level floor, stepping down 400mm at the junction between the two original houses which now form the building. The upper recital room has two sash windows in recessed bays within the curved bay addition, these have secondary glazing and shutters which have been painted shut.

The upper Recital Room has a flat reeded cornice and panelling to dado level.

The lower Recital Room (within the eastern building) has slightly different panelling to the dado. There are four sash windows in recessed bays with secondary glazing and shutters evident with the hinges painted as with all other shutters in the building. Most of the sash cords in this room are broken. The mouldings on the shutters of the lower recital room are all of one design but are different from the upper recital room and other examples of shutters in the building. All of the timber reveals to the windows in the Recital Room have moulded soffits.

The modern ceiling has been lowered.

Above left: Lower Recital Room

Above right: Upper Recital Room – curved bay

Regency style reeded cornice of upper Recital Room

4.2 Ground floor, eastern building

Room no.7 (Office)

There is an old axial beam supporting floor joists at right angles to street. This beam is 5 inches (125mm) wide, laid flat and has a simple stopped chamfer at its western end when meeting chimney stack. There is an up brace to the rail in north east corner of room. The framing can be assigned a 16th or 17th century date. Old lath and plaster can be seen on the ceiling. This timber framing is evidence for the earliest know phase of the building and may have originally been jettied, although no evidence can be seen as much of the structure is now concealed.

There are two sash windows in this room, one 6 over 6 with and one 8 over 8, the latter being a modern replacement. The 6 over 6 sash has moulded shutters but a plain soffit, whilst the 8 over 8 sash has flush panelled shutters and a moulded soffit.

Room 7 (office) - Above left: Looking towards Shenfield Road

Above right: Up-brace to rail

Kitchen

Nothing can be seen of the structure except for the 16th/17th century floor joists and beam in the ceiling, the partitions of the kitchen are thought to be modern insertions.

Stair Tower

The exposed timber framing that can be seen includes posts, beams, joists, mortises, peg holes and a mortise for a diamond mullion. The current modern staircase has replaced the original in the stair tower.

The diamond mortise found in the timber rail in the stair tower indicates that there was previously a window mullion in this location. A window in this location signifies that this was the location of the rear wall of the original building and that the stair tower is a later addition. There is more evidence for the stair tower being a later insertion in the attic where a butt purlin of the roof structure has been partially cut through in order to give adequate headroom between the attic and stair tower.

Left: Ground floor kitchen ceiling - beam and joists.

Right: Ground floor of stair tower showing beams and joists, which also pass through kitchen.

4.3 Ground floor, 20th century extension

Workshop

Within the modern single storey extension the workshop has a roof light in the flat roof. The workshop is accessed from the stair tower.

Bar Area

Part of the modern single storey extension the bar area has a roof light behind the bar and a floor level lower than that of the adjoining Middle II Room.

4.4 First Floor, western building

Room 1

There is a very large boxed in beam running parallel to the road through Room 1 and the adjacent landing This beam indicates the original extent of the building which has been extended northwards into the curved bay.

There are three sashes in recessed bays within the curved bay with shutters that are painted shut.

Room 2

There are two 6 over 6 sash windows with shutters painted shut overlooking the flat roof of the canted bay below. The mouldings to the shutters are simple quarter round mouldings in contrast with the more elaborate profiles on other shutters in the building.

Low in the centre of the north wall there is a vent present, indicating a chimney stack between Room 2 and the ladies toilets.

There is an old four panelled door connecting Room 3 with Room 2.

Room 3

Room 3 has one 8 over 8 sash window in the curved bay and one 6 over 6 sash directly over main entrance. The sash over the main entrance has secondary glazing.

There is an old four panelled door connecting Room 3 with Room 2.

A cased in beam can be seen in the curved bay, evidence of this bay being a later addition.

Landing

The first floor landing has two sash windows which are both 6 over 6 with shutters painted shut. One of these windows has panelling beneath sill level.

The large boxed in beam which can be seen in the adjacent Room 1 which indicates the original line of the building also passes through this area.

Kitchen

None of the structure can be seen in the kitchen. All wall and floor coverings are modern.

Room 1 - Left: Curved bay and cased in beam Right: Detail of panelling and shutters in recessed bays

Room 2 – Left: Two sashes with secondary glazing Right: Detail of sash and shutter moulding

Left: Room 3 – One sash in curved bay – One sash adjacent to bay with secondary glazing

4.5 First floor, eastern building

Room 4

As in the recital room directly beneath, there is a drop in floor level between Room 3 and Room 4 which corresponds to the original separated plans of the buildings.

There is a bridging joist running parallel to the road across the room, with a deeper binding joist perpendicular to it, this is possibly a rolled steel joist (RSJ).

It is thought that the ceiling has old lath and plaster.

The room contains four of the façades six sash windows, all of which have shutters which are not in operation due to painted hinges and secondary glazing. The creeper on the front of the building has penetrated through the windows. The first two sashes from the west have a more elaborate moulding than those to the east which have only a recessed panel with no moulding. The third window from the west is a modern replacement and has horns on both the upper and lower sash. All of the windows have low sills with panelling beneath.

Left: Room 4 – Three (of four) sashes – Binding joist probably supported by RSJ

Right: Example of a moulded soffit found in recessed window bays throughout the building

Music Room

No access could be gained to this room although from the exterior it can be seen to contain an 8 over 8 sash window.

As mentioned above the second bay from the east of the eastern elevation breaks forwards slightly and contains a 6 over 6 sash window.

Office

No access

4.6 Attic Storey, western building

Talking Newspaper

The ‘Talking Newspaper’ room is split into two separately accessed rooms (east and west) contained with the front mansard roof of the western part of the building. Previously used for recording purposes the eastern room is lined with acoustic tiles. Each room of the talking newspaper contains one casement dormer window each with twelve lights.

As with both the ground and first floor there is a change in floor level between the workshop of the eastern building and talking newspaper rooms.

The ceiling has suffered damage where the valley gutter has leaked subsequent to the theft of lead from the roof.

Talking newspaper (East) – lined with acoustic tile

Talking newspaper (West) – serious damp to ceiling

Room 5

There is one 20th century side opening casement dormer window in Room 5 which has six lights.

Room 5 dormer window

Store Room

The store room contains one 8 light casement window.

Recording Room

This room, unnamed on previously floor plans, is lined with acoustic tiles and would previously been used for recording purposes and contains one six light casement window.

4.7 Attic storey, eastern building

Stair Tower

The top plates of the stair tower structure can be seen in the gabled roof of the stair tower.

Although ceiled in the collar height indicates either a clasped purlin or collar rafter roof structure.

Workshop

The workshop is contained within the attic space of the main span of the eastern part of the building. The head height is approximately 1.80m (6ft) decreasing to a vertical wall height of approximately 0.8m.

The room is divided into two sections by the large chimney stack. There is one north facing and two south facing dormer windows to the west of the stack, and one south facing dormer to the east of the stack, all of which are 20th century.

The 17th century butt side purlin roof is exposed internally and can be seen to have joggled purlins.

Through the dormer windows it is possible to see that the creeper is blocking the parapet gutters.

Joggled butt side purlin roof structure

4.8 Cellar, western building

Accessed from the main corridor, the wall on one side of the cellar staircase is made of lath and plaster, and the other of brick, probably infill to a timber frame. The cellar is dry, in fair condition and has an old brick floor.

The majority of the cellar is directly underneath the upper recital room, with a smaller area underneath the main corridor. In this smaller area a honeycomb wall constructed of modern bricks has been constructed on top of an earlier brick wall, indicating that the floor beneath the corridor and possibly Room 6 has been re-laid at some point.

In the front wall of the cellar, there is an opening, a former window, linked to a small covered light well, which is providing a small amount of ventilation.

In the cellar there are narrow section joists and a bridging joist exposed, a number of which, including the bridging joist, have been repaired by having softwood timber bolted to the failing members. The main bridging joist shows sign of decay although it looks and feels dry. The ends of the common joists have been picked up by bolting a timber to the bridging joist.

The cellar houses an old store, enclosed by a wall and door partially made of horizontal wooden laths to ensure good ventilation and the maintenance of a cool temperature. Inside wooden shelving is preserved, some set within two arched alcoves. The wine store is in good condition and is a notable survival.

Above the two arched alcoves the brickwork arches into the cellar. This is a typical detail for construction beneath a hearth, and would indicate a hearth in the upper recital room, with the alcoves acting as relieving arches.

Stair to cellar – Left: Lath and plaster. Right: Brick infill

Left: Ventilated storage area - bridging and joists visible with repairs

Top right: Arched brick alcoves in cellar

Bottom right: Arching brickwork in cellar indicating presence of hearth in upper Recital Room

5 Assessment of significance

The Old House is a building judged to be of national importance, being listed grade II*. Government guidance (PPS5, *Planning for the historic environment*) requires the significance of listed buildings, or heritage assets, to be assessed when contemplating carrying out works to them. Significance can be seen as derived from the heritage values attached to a place or building, these being defined as evidential, communal, historic, and aesthetic (English Heritage, *Conservation principles*).

The Old House makes a positive and valuable contribution to the street scene in Shenfield Road, and is one of several handsome 18th-century brick-fronted houses in this part of the town at the entrance to the Conservation Area. Like others in this group, it incorporates an altogether older house, which forms the eastern part of the present building. As such, it represents evidence for the prosperity of Brentwood as a market town with coaching inns on the main London Road, and the gentrification of older buildings and plots. Its detailed history has not become clear from a rapid investigation in the Essex Record Office. As a landmark on the main road, and in its recent role as a community centre, it will be familiar to many people and hence of high communal value.

As to the architectural interest or aesthetic value of the house, the following important features can be identified:

- The timber frame of the older eastern part
- The high quality Georgian brickwork
- The façade to the Shenfield Road, that part of the building most readily appreciated by the public
- The six flue concertina stack that rises from the eastern part of the house
- The sash windows, as essential feature of the design of the façade, and their internal shutters.
- The main staircase
- Surviving old internal decoration, confined to the dado panelling and a fragment of an original cornice
- The well preserved cellar
- Of the internal plan, the rooms opening into the projecting bays, and the Recital Room, are important spaces that give some idea of the original elegance of the interior

Scope for, and constraints, upon future uses of the house and alterations to it

All the features highlighted above should be retained and preserved substantially unaltered. The extent of modernisation and rebuilding inside the house, and the impact of institutional uses, is such that the interiors are not particularly sensitive and there would therefore be relative freedom of action in adapting it to new uses, subject to obtaining listed building consent for any alterations. Relatively little old plaster seems to survive, original cornices and mouldings, doors and skirtings, are largely absent. The modern extensions, partitions and internal finishes are of no architectural or historic interest, and could be altered with relative freedom. It should however be noted that without opening up, it is often unclear what walls are made of and whether they are old or modern.

Future uses

The Old House would most simply accommodate office or institutional uses, in line with how it has been used historically, and to which it is already adapted.

Structural condition

The recent theft of lead from the roof has caused water to enter parts of the first floor and led to an outbreak of mould growth. This will require roof repairs, stripping out of damaged finishes, and a period of drying time before reinstatement. There is also a damp area on the wall of room 6 on the ground floor, the cause of which is unclear. Repairs have been carried out at roof level, but should also be carried out internally as a matter of urgency.

This damage apart, the house seems structurally sound. The mansard roofs of the later building have been relaid relatively recently. The suspended floor beneath the hall and room 6 has also been renewed. The existence of boxed in beams implies that the timber frame and joists have been extensively reinforced with steel. There was no obvious trace of rising damp. The cellar is dry. However, wall surfaces are covered up by paper and it could be that there are faults which are concealed. The older eastern part of the house has a solid floor and its walls were, and probably still are, timber framed. A structure of this type has the potential to suffer from damp being forced into the walls if they do not have a damp proof membrane designed to work effectively with that of the floor, though no evidence of this was noted. There is a very slight bow in the façade of the older eastern part of the house, which may indicate lack of cohesion between two skins of brickwork or between brickwork and a timber frame. This does not look serious, but it might be advisable to seek advice from a structural engineer accredited in conservation.

The creeper growing externally has been allowed to get out of control, and is forcing its way through windows and blocking parapet gutters. The creeper is attractive and has been part of the street scene for 50 years or more. But if it is to remain, it should be cut back and confined to localised areas of the façade, and trimmed once or twice a year.

Principles for repair and conservation

Repair work should be informed by an understanding of the fabric, and based upon the principles of respecting the character of the building and preserving its historic fabric. There would be a presumption in favour of retaining old lime plaster wherever possible, and against the removal of old brick or stud walls, and also of the chimney stacks. New work should as far as possible be designed to be reversible.

Works to the original windows should be limited to their repair and maintenance. Given the scale of internal alterations, the sash windows and their shutters are a remarkable survival. Although some secondary glazing is present, it has not been applied to all of the windows and where it has been some units are damaged or missing. When contemplating work to the windows, the possibility should be considered of returning the window shutters to operation. They would add character to the building whilst providing

improved insulation. If shutters and thermally lined curtains were used there would be no need for secondary glazing.

The hard landscaping of the space to the rear of the building should be improved to enhance its setting and complement the Georgian architecture of the projecting bay.

Listed building consent

Listed building consent is not required for like-for-like repairs, but is for alterations, which may include the use of similar but not identical materials. Since the Old House is listed grade II*, English Heritage would have to be consulted on a listed building application. Because Brentwood is a planning authority, any application made by the Council for listed building consent would have to go to the Secretary of State.

Appendix: Schedule of Urgent Works

Old House, Brentwood

Item	Old House	Estimated Cost (£)
1.0	**Roof**	
1.1	Clear all uPVC gutters and downpipes and ensure they are in full working order.	
1.2	Remove all plant growth, mosses, dead leaves, debris and any other loose or unused items from all valley, and parapet gutters and flat roofs. Virginia Creeper – cut back from parapet copings, bay window roof and window openings.	
1.3	Allow to inspect parapet gutters, flashings, lower tile courses, copings and bay window roof and repair as necessary in matching materials.	
1.4	Existing decayed felt to the roof of the front and rear mansard dormer windows with new felt – replace with new felt. Allow to inspect felt to the dormers (2 front, 1 rear) of lower tiled roof and repair/replace in felt as necessary.	
1.5	Entire roof - replace missing or damaged slates and tiles as necessary.	
2.0	**Front Elevation (Shenfield Road)**	
2.1	Virginia Creeper – refer to 1.2 above.	
2.2	Inspect and repair front rainwater pipe and SVP. Remove plant growth (dead/alive) and secure fixings and alignment. Ensure free flow of drainage at base and clear/repair masonry surface as necessary. Remove or securely fix loose wires. Patch re-point as necessary.	
3.0	**Rear Elevation**	
3.1	Rake out and re-point 4 courses of decayed pointing above brick window arch to the first floor rear of the building (above 'Old House' sign).	
4.0	**Joinery**	
4.1	Joinery –fully repair/overhaul and leave in sound and fully operable condition. Works to include: repair of rotten timbers, replacing missing parts (e.g., sash cords), re-balancing and re-decorating. Repair/replace secondary glazing throughout.	
5.0	**Interior**	
5.1	Clear all damaged ceilings and all carpeted floor finishes (rooms…...	
5.2	Remove surplus fixtures/fittings/furniture and dispose of as directed by Brentwood BC.	
5.3	Remove damaged lath and plaster from ceiling in room No. 7 (Office) and re-plaster to match. Establish source/cause of	

	damage.	
6.0	**Other**	
6.1	Security:	
6.2	Structural Engineers Report. Allow to inspect and report of the structural stability of the brickwork to the front elevation. Also the brick arch (item 3.1 above).	400
7.0	Contingency. Contractor to state contingency allowed for and why:	
	Total:	
	VAT @ 20%:	
	Grand Total:	

Notes:
Ref. Items 1.2 and 2.1 – regular future maintenance is essential to ensure that the creeper does not encroach upon parapet copings, gutters, downpipes and flat roofs and window openings.

Whilst the property is vacant, it is recommended that a low background level of heating is maintained throughout the building to help guard against dampness.

Specification Guidelines
Window Repair and Overhaul

1. Works must be undertaken by a qualified joiner and preferably one with experience of traditional window repair.
2. Sashes must be removed from frame prior to repair. At all times great care shall be taken to ensure any historic glass is not damaged.
3. Excess or defective paint or putty should be very carefully removed ensuring that existing historic glass is not damaged. New putty to be traditional linseed oil putty to match original. Paint should not go over the face of the glass by more than 2mm.
4. Joinery should be fully overhauled, repaired and left in good working order, ensuring that the maximum amount of sound historic material is retained (i.e., timber, glazing and mechanical components). Any new timber components must exactly match the thickness and mouldings of the original.
5. The structural integrity of the window should be maintained throughout the repair. Spliced repairs should be designed to ensure that moisture is

directed towards the outer face of the timber and not to lie on the repair joint. Splices should be scarfed with the length of the scarf at least three times its thickness. Timber pegs/dowels or non-ferrous screws may be used as well as wood glue.

6. Decayed sills should be replaced in full or cut back to below the underside of the bottom rail. If the sill is being repaired, the new wood must be compatible with the existing. If the sill is being replaced in full, the new wood should be hardwood and preferably air seasoned European Oak. Sills should be suitably weathered and have an adequate overhang (with drip).
7. All new wood should be from a sustainable source and FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) approved.
8. Non-ferrous 'L' brackets (flush rebated) may be used to strengthen loose joints between rails and stiles, provided the wood is sound. Ensure that they are set in flush with the face of the timber.
9. New timber must be compatible with the existing. Softwood repairs should be carried out using softwood of an unsorted joinery grade or better, e.g., Upper Gulf Scandinavian Redwood.
10. Great care should be taken to ensure that existing historic glass (characterised by subtle distortions) is retained. Such glass is usually very thin (e.g., 1½ to 2mm) and fragile. Replacement with thicker modern float glass will 'flatten' the appearance of the window and will put sash windows out of balance. If replacement glazing is required, this should match the original as closely as possible.
11. All surfaces (sashes, frames and sills) to be thoroughly rubbed down to provide smooth and even surface ready for redecoration. Repaint using proprietary based paint system ensuring manufactures instructions are complied with in full. If original paint is lead based, ensure new paint is compatible (check with manufacturers). Do not over paint pulley stiles. If new oak is being used for sills, use metal primers. Colours subject to agreement
12. Draught proofing may be considered but only where it is confined to staff and parting beads, e.g., timber parting beads with integral weatherpile carrier available from Reddiseals (0845 165 9507) ref. PB514 or PB 515 or from Mighton Architectural Products (0800 056 0471). Details of any proposed draught proofing are to be agreed in advance.
13. Resin repairs should be avoided unless separately agreed.
14. Replace the sash cords if the existing are old, damaged, or have been over-painted.
15. Ensure full and smooth operation of sashes and ensure sashes are correctly balanced.
16. Hardware (pulleys, fasteners, lifts, locks, locks, etc), must be good quality and match each other. Existing fittings should be retained if they are of historic value.

17. Any disturbance to surrounding building fabric during the course of the window repair should be made good upon completion, including re-decoration both internally and externally.

Re-pointing

1. Mortar should be no stronger than 1:2:9 cement, lime, sand or 1:3 hydraulic lime, sand.
2. Sand should be graded/blended to ensure a match with the original mortar.
3. Rake out the existing mortar by hand taking care not to damage the brickwork edges. Rake out to a depth of at least 20mm. Pointing that cannot easily be raked out by hand should be left.
4. Prior to applying the mortar, brush away any loose material from the joints and lightly wet. Apply mortar using a pointing iron to match the thickness of the joints, finishing the joint flat and slightly recessed, ensuring that the original thickness of the joint is maintained and that mortar is not carried over the face of the brickwork. Under no circumstances should the joint be 'struck'.
5. Ensure that the finished mortar blends in with any surviving original mortar. Test panels may be useful to confirm this.
6. Do not re-point if freezing weather is likely. Conversely, during hot and dry weather, keep the pointing moist to ensure slow curing.
7. After the initial set, the texture of the aggregate may be exposed with a stipple brush or fine water spray.
8. Ensure that no mortar is left on the face of the brickwork upon completion.

Leadwork

All leadwork to satisfy the recommendations of the Lead Sheet Association.

General

All relevant Heath and Safety legislation to be complied with.

P Skeet 28/10/10

The Morton Partnership

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THE MORTON PARTNERSHIP LTD.

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Our ref: EJM/BEB/13115~01h

6 December 2010

Paul Skeet
Essex County Council
County Hall
CHELSMFORD
Essex CM1 1LF

by email only

Dear Paul

RE: THE OLD HOUSE, SHENFIELD ROAD, BRENTWOOD, ESSEX

I was pleased to meet you on Monday 29 November 2010, in the afternoon, along with Steve Cole from Brentwood Borough Council. The purpose of the visit was to carry out a structural inspection of, in particular, the front elevation of the building, and then also to briefly walk around the remaining building to see if any other major structural defects were obvious. The inspection was visual only.

I have been passed a copy of the Conservation Statement prepared by Essex County Council, copies of floor plans by Brentwood Borough Council, and finally some ball park costings prepared by Bakers of Danbury, based on the schedule of urgent works.

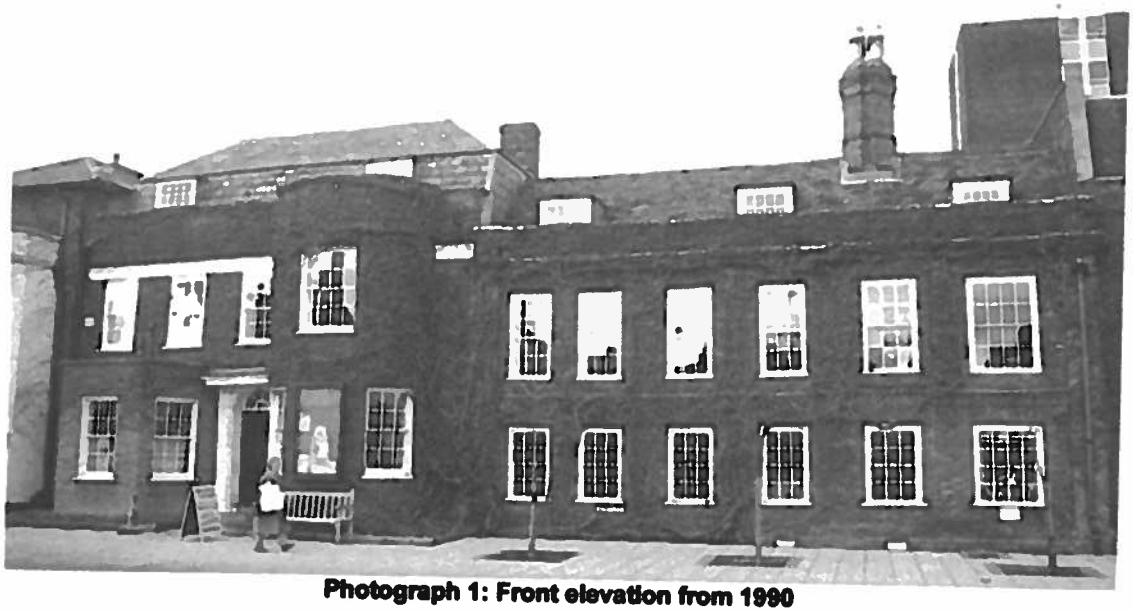
The front elevation can be subdivided into two main parts and according to the Conservation Statement these were two separate buildings originally which accounts for the variations in floor levels. The eastern section is of two storeys with a pitched roof over with dormers, and six box sash windows at ground floor level, with six further above at first floor level. The western section is also of two storeys, but slightly taller and then with a mansard roof above (see photograph 2), a two storey circular bay to the east side and a later single storey bay to the west side.

To the eastern section, on close inspection, it does appear that this is 'faced' with a skin of brickwork which adopts a standard Georgian technique for finer quality brickwork to the face, with a rougher, more economic backing brickwork behind. This means that the front, finer coursed brickwork rarely corresponds through with the courses of the backing brickwork, and consequently there is generally little bonding with snapped headers used to keep the Flemish bond. This can mean that the 4 ½" front facing becomes delaminated from the backing behind as there are few headers providing a tie.

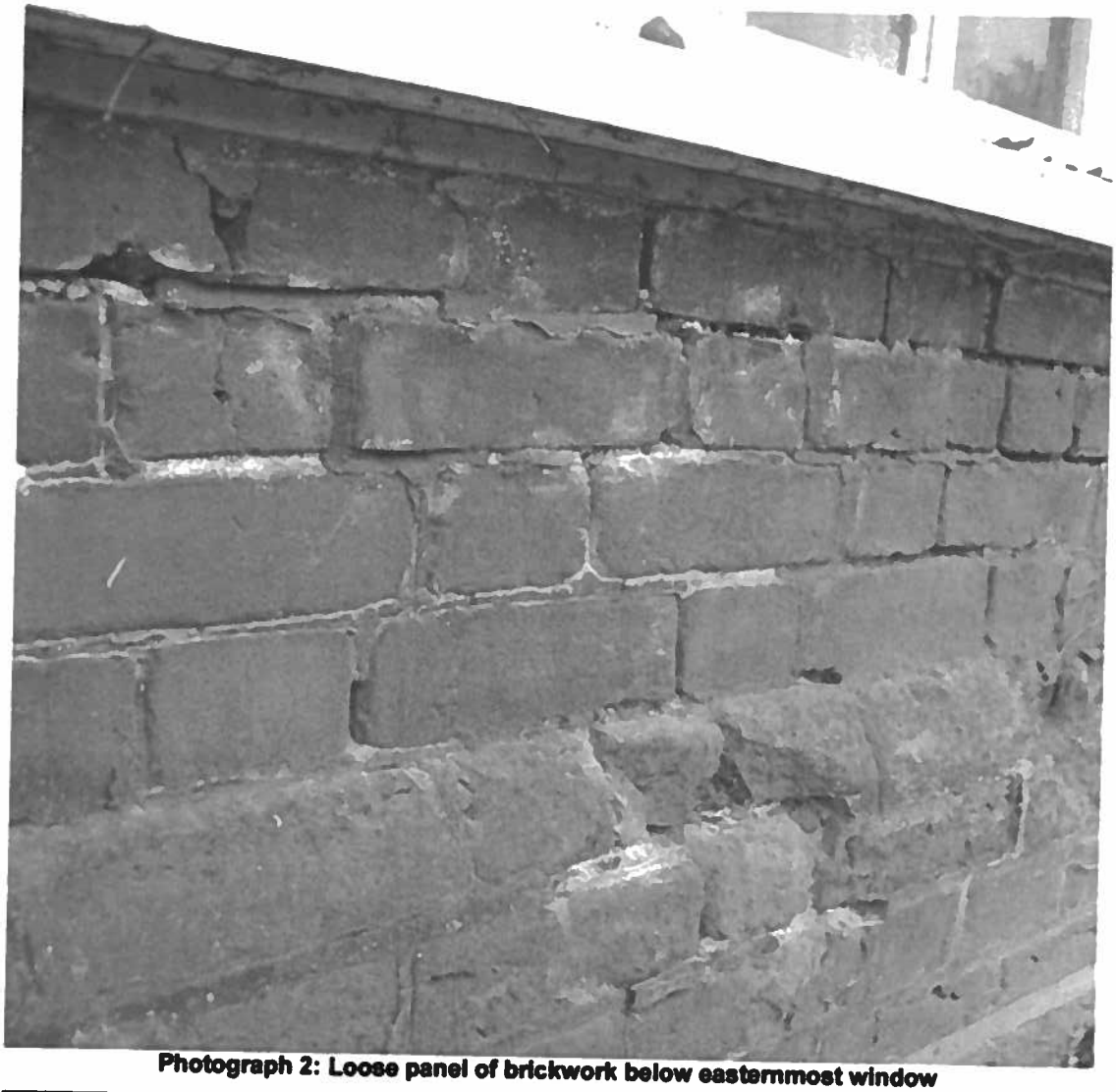
Often, by gently tapping the brickwork, 'liveness' can be detected and certainly at the Old House, I was able to establish that there is slightly live brickwork, but not to an extent which suggests a significant problem at this time, other than at local positions.

Below the easternmost window at ground floor level, there is a small panel which is extremely loose with the bricks being moved by hand (see photograph 2), and which either needs deep re-pointing and possibly some grouting, or alternatively, rebuilding. The latter perhaps being quite useful in establishing the condition of the backing brickwork behind.

The panel between the head of this window and the first floor window is also slightly loose, and would benefit from pinning. This is a technique of drilling holes through individual bricks at a slight downward angle, and then inserting stainless steel threaded rod, or proprietary anchors such as Helibar, and setting them in resin. This is essentially providing a tie between the external leaf and the backing brickwork. The holes are then made good with a brick dust mortar to match. We attach some specification notes for this work.



Photograph 1: Front elevation from 1990



Photograph 2: Loose panel of brickwork below easternmost window

Photograph 3: Dominant window detailing to second window from east end

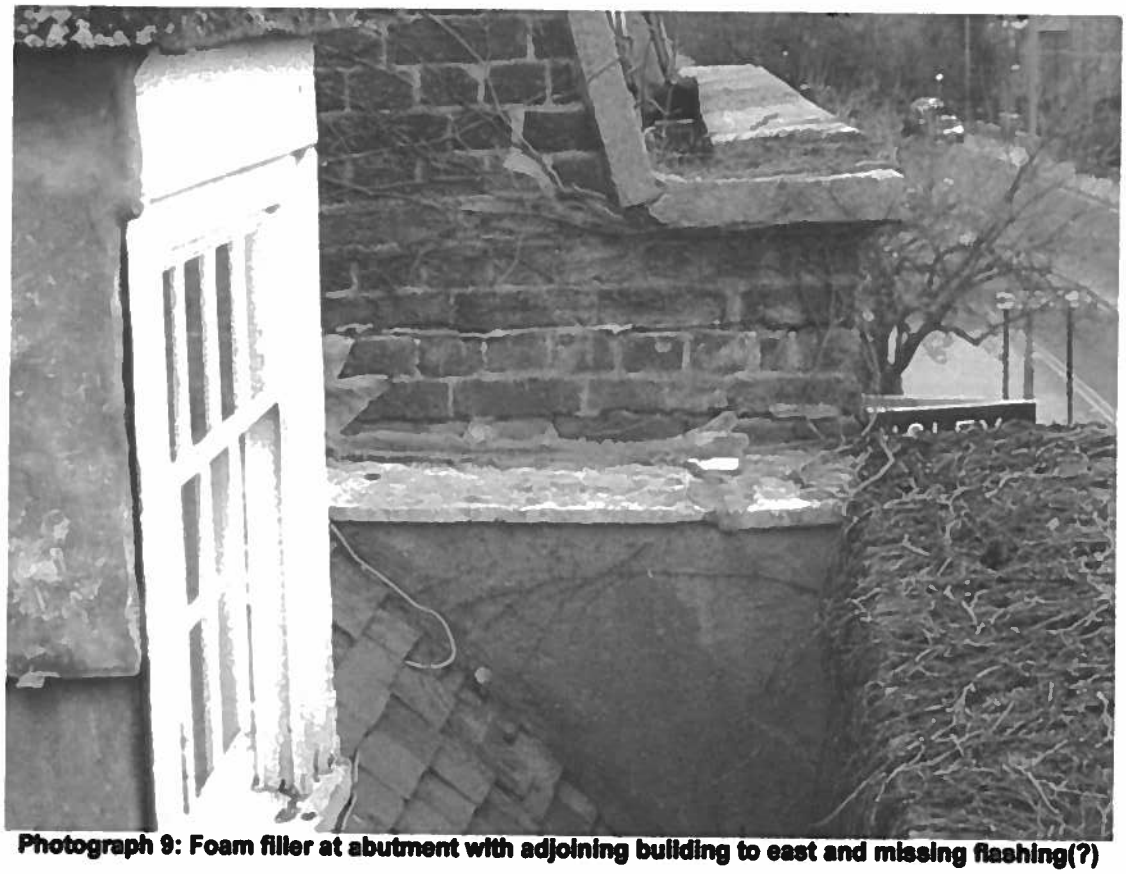
Photograph 4: Set forward brickwork adjacent to window reveal found to be loose

Photograph 5: Missing section of flashing to string course

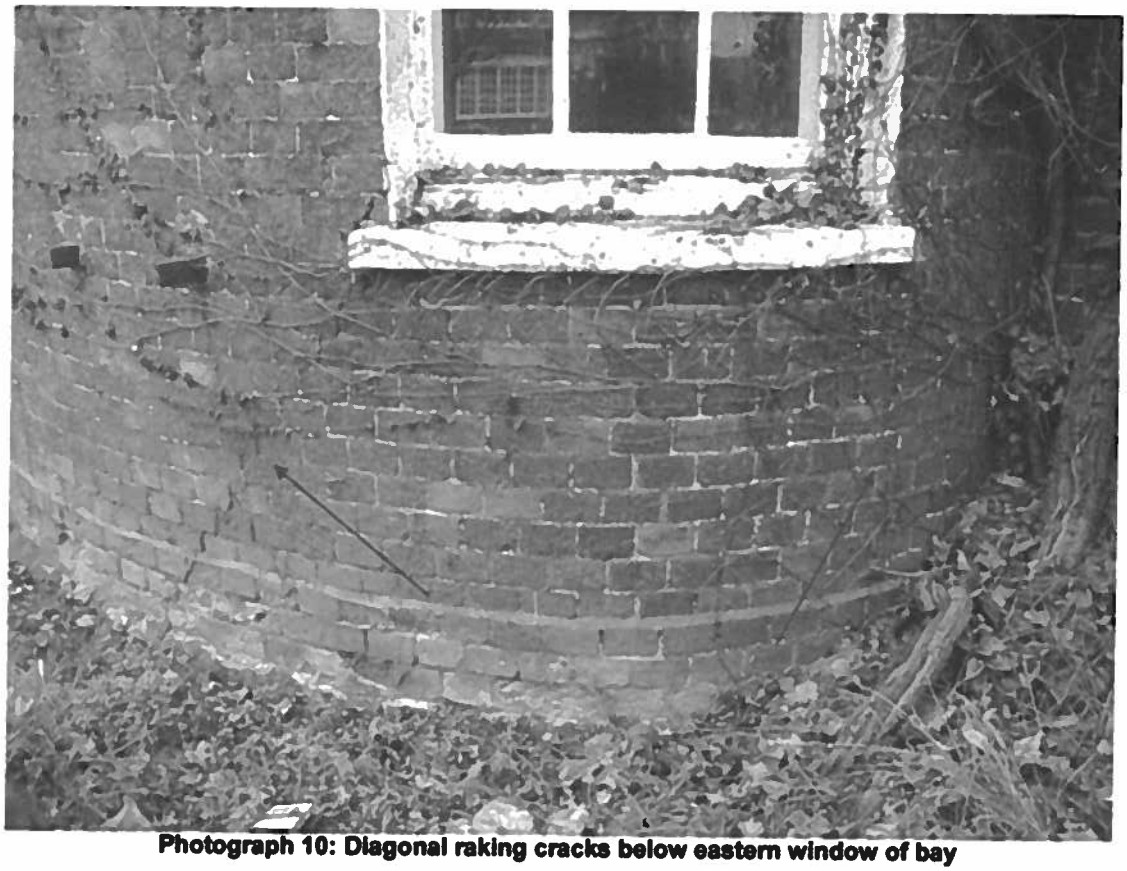
Photograph 6: Missing length of cornice flashing

Photograph 7: Leaf debris in parapet gutter

Photograph 8: Locally decayed bricks,



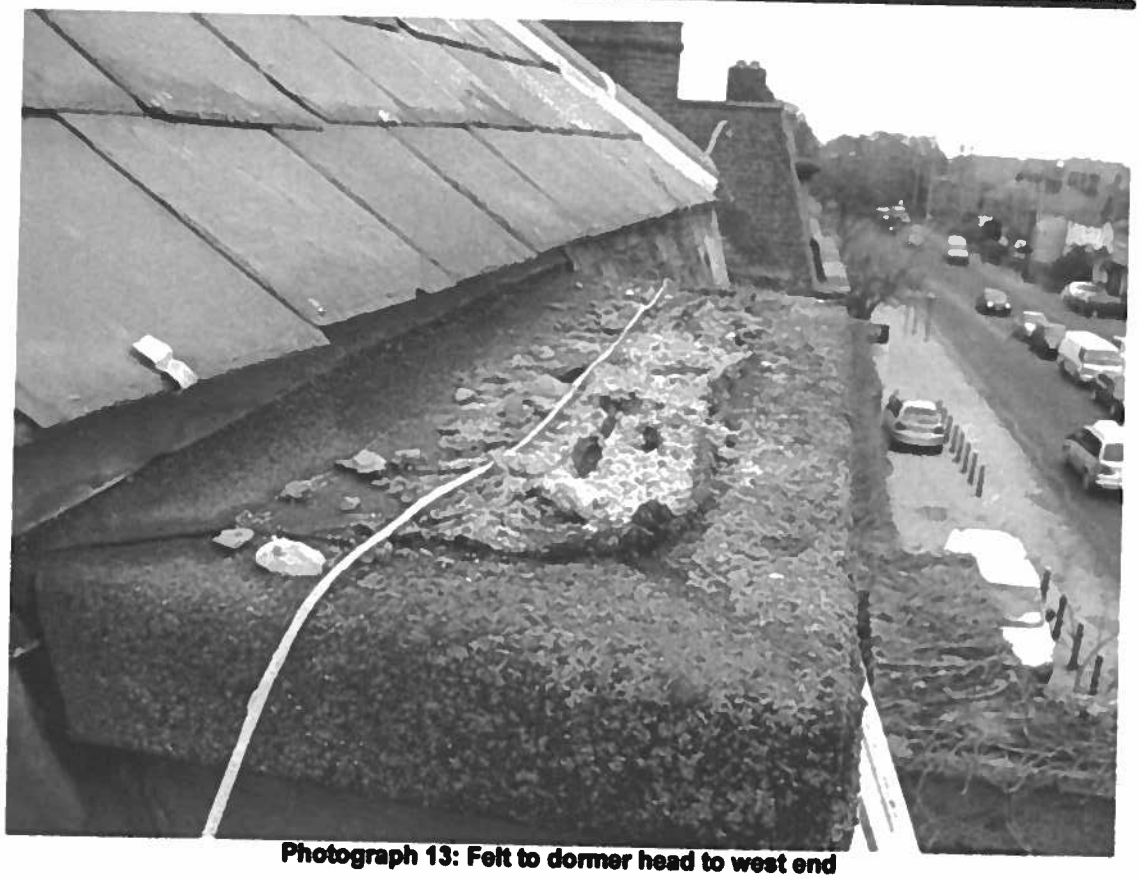
Photograph 9: Foam filler at abutment with adjoining building to east and missing flashing(?)



Photograph 10: Diagonal raking cracks below eastern window of bay

Photograph 11: Crack extends above window but partial concealed by creeper

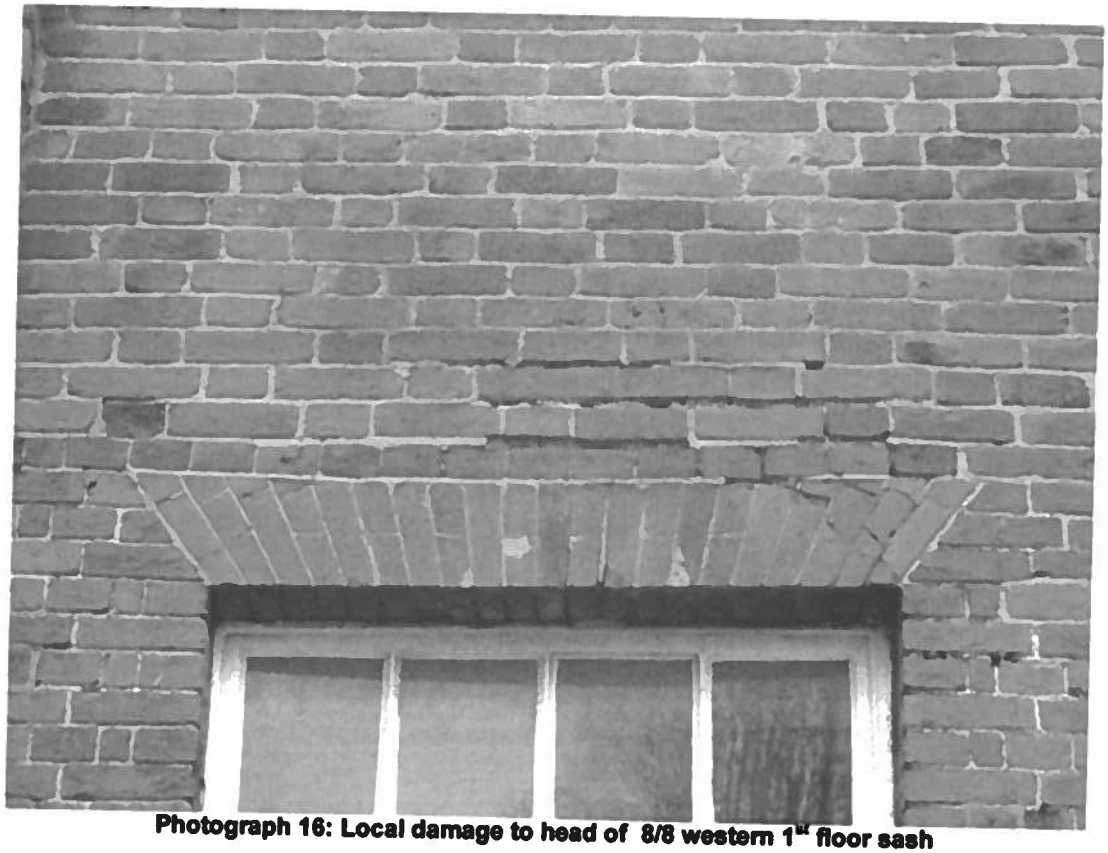
Photograph 12: Crack below western window of bay



Photograph 13: Felt to dormer head to west end

Photograph 14: Rear elevation of west building

Photograph 15: Part view of rear of east building



Photograph 16: Local damage to head of 8/8 western 1st floor sash

The second window from the east end, at first floor level, has been made more dominant by the brickwork being enhanced both to the sides, below and above this (see photograph 3). Generally, it projects by 20-25mm from the facework behind. This, through setting out, may weaken the bond with that behind, and certainly the set forward brickwork to either side of the window was quite loose when tapped (see photograph 4), and requires pinning back. The head and base of the window will need to be checked when scaffold access is available and the creeper removed to allow an improved check.

Between the windows there is a slightly projecting string course of brick, with a lead flashing over. Where inspected from a ladder, this still appears reasonably solid and the flashing fulfilling its function to prevent water sitting on this ledge and entering the building which, of course, would lead to vulnerability of the internal timber packing lintels above the windows. As this projects from the general face the stretcher bricks probably have a thick mortar backing to make up the void. One section of flashing is missing and needs replacing (see photograph 5) and in general it was noted that the panels of brickwork between the ground and first floor windows needs re-pointing at minimum.

From roof level, the parapet gutter to this section of building was noted that one relatively long length of flashing to the cornice below parapet level is missing, and the brickwork quite badly decayed (see photograph 6). At minimum, a new flashing will be required but possibly some consolidation of the brickwork, or at possible replacement. However, it should be noted that these are all moulded bricks. It was noted that the parapet gutter had significant leaf debris (see photograph 7) in which will inhibit its ability to drain and therefore increase the risk of leaks.

There is extensive creeper growth on the building. This is a sucker plant and therefore does not tend to extend into the brickwork itself. However it will also reduce the ability of the wall to dry after wetting incidents (rain etc) and this can lead to greater decay to the brickwork (see photograph 8). This is not occurring to a significant extent but we do recommend that the creeper is managed suitable to reduce its effects and as indicated by you in your schedule.

From the parapet gutter at the east end the abutment with the adjoining building could be seen and has had foam filler used to the rear (see photograph 9). It appears that there may have been a flashing (lead?) at this position as evidenced by the open joint, and it would seem sensible to re-introduce this to reduce the risk of water ingress to both properties at this position. The flashing would extend into the brickwork of the adjoining property so agreement with them will be needed.

To the western side of the building, the semi-circular bay was found to have diagonal raking cracks running up and through the windows, that to the east being more significant (see photographs 10, 11 and 12). When looking at the plans, it can be seen that there is a cellar internally to this section of building, but which does not appear to extend out under the bays, although we were not able to access this area at the time of the inspection. Therefore, from the information available it does seem likely that the bay window is founded at a much higher level than the main walls alongside which form the basement, and therefore would have suffered some likely initial differential constructional settlement, or simply differential movement due to the assumed different founding conditions.

This may have been aggravated by the significant shrub growth alongside, through and either root growth or the action of this on the assumed clay sub-soils. The cracks have been pointed in a cement based mortar, have slightly reopened but not to a significant degree, and the movement does not cause me any great concern to establish how progressive in nature it is, or not.

I do note that the curved brick arches, which are over the heads of the windows, have apparent iron flat plate lintels below to help support these and necessary as this curve in their length. No signs of any significant corrosion was apparent to their ends.

The flat roof over the bay was also accessed and you have already noted in your schedule the poor condition of some of the dormer heads which have a felt covering (see photograph 13).

To the rear elevation (see photograph 14 and 15) the condition of the brickwork generally appears reasonably except there is some local damaged to one window head to the west end at 1st level to the west building (see photograph 16). The damage looks old but certainly the panel of brickwork above need re-pointing and the arch should be checked at this time for stability. Some local pinning may be required at the west end where the bricks are fractured or alternatively the introduction of a flat bar lintel below.

RE: THE OLD HOUSE, SHENFIELD ROAD, BRENTWOOD, ESSEX

Internally the building was walked through to all accessible areas, noting that the room to the east of the eastern building at 1st floor level and the basement were not accessible. As you are aware the lead valley gutter between the north and south roofs had been stolen and has been made good for the foreseeable future. This has allowed water ingress and I note your schedule includes for taking down of defective plaster, removal of carpets etc which seems very necessary to ensure the building drys out as quickly as possible.

I did also suggest it may be sensible to create some inspection hatches into the eaves void to the eastern building in the ashlar walls to allow inspection and a check on the condition of the parapet gutter sub-structure and associated roof timbers.

Elsewhere there were clear signs of normal deformations of the floors etc, but not unexpected for a building of this type and age and through its past use the building seems to have coped reasonable well. We have not checked load lines etc but generally did not see anything of significant structural concern, although obviously this was a very brief walk through.

In conclusion there are some works necessary to the front elevation where the face brickwork has become detached from the rear backing wall. This should be by pinning as attached. It may be that with full access some other areas may become obvious and this should be checked but gently tapping of the brickwork when access is provided to remove the creeper around the windows etc.

Other works identified are principally what can be described as maintenance works, with replacement of missing flashing and leadwork, clearing of gutters etc. The brief walk through did not identify any significant or obvious structural defects, although we re-iterate that this was not a full structural survey.

Our insurers require us to say that we have not inspected woodwork or other parts of the structure unless specifically detailed in the report, which are covered, unexposed or inaccessible and we are therefore unable to report that any such part of the property is free from defect.

This report has been carried out to the Client's requirements and no liability is intended or will be accepted from any third party whatsoever. The limits of liability are restricted to the contents of this report. No opening-up or investigation of foundations etc was carried out, the inspection being visual only. No checks on load-bearing capabilities have been carried out.

Please do call me if you have any queries.

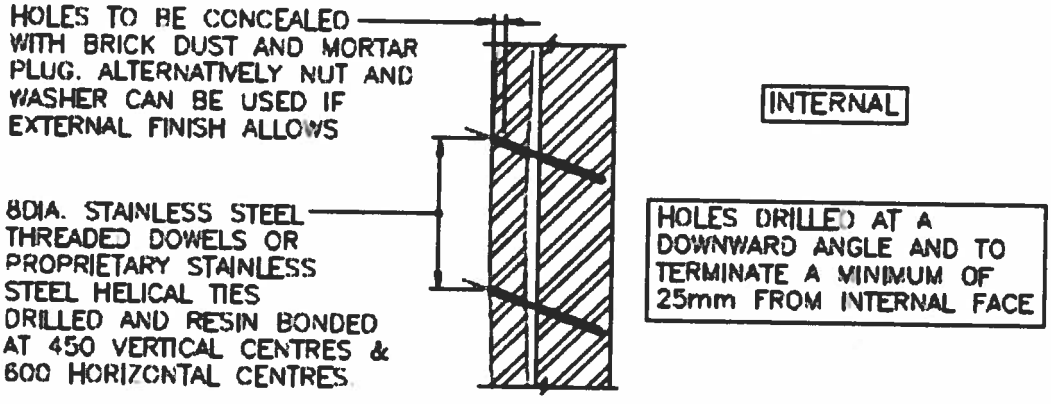
Yours sincerely
FOR THE MORTON PARTNERSHIP LIMITED,

Edward Morton

EDWARD MORTON

Encls - Photographs

cc Barry Fagg – Brentwood Borough Council
cc Steve Cole – Brentwood Borough Council



1. DRILL HOLE AT SLIGHT DOWNWARD ANGLE THROUGH CENTRE OF BRICK FACE.
2. BLOW OUT AND CLEAN HOLE.
3. INJECT RESIN
4. SET BAR IN WALL (WITH NUT IF REQUIRED)
5. MAKE GOOD HOLE IN BRICK FACE WITH BRICK DUST MORTAR

Members Interests

Members of the Council must declare any pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests and the nature of the interest at the beginning of an agenda item and that, on declaring a pecuniary interest, they are required to leave the Chamber.

- **What are pecuniary interests?**

  A person's pecuniary interests are their business interests (for example their employment trade, profession, contracts, or any company with which they are associated) and wider financial interests they might have (for example trust funds, investments, and asset including land and property).

- **Do I have any disclosable pecuniary interests?**

  You have a disclosable pecuniary interest if you, your spouse or civil partner, or a person you are living with as a spouse or civil partner have a disclosable pecuniary interest set out in the Council's Members' Code of Conduct.

- **What does having a disclosable pecuniary interest stop me doing?**

  If you are present at a meeting of your council or authority, of its executive or any committee o the executive, or any committee, sub-committee, joint committee, or joint sub-committee of your authority, and you have a disclosable pecuniary interest relating to any business that is or will be considered at the meeting, you must not :

  - participate in any discussion of the business at the meeting, of if you become aware of your disclosable pecuniary interest during the meeting participate further in any discussion of the business or,
  - participate in any vote or further vote taken on the matter at the meeting.

  These prohibitions apply to any form of participation, including speaking as a member of the public.

  - **Other Pecuniary Interests**

  Other Pecuniary Interests are also set out in the Members' Code of Conduct and apply only to you as a Member.

  If you have an Other Pecuniary Interest in an item of business on the agenda then you must disclose that interest and withdraw from the room while that business is being considered

- **Non-Pecuniary Interests**

Non –pecuniary interests are set out in the Council's Code of Conduct and apply to you as a Member and also to relevant persons where the decision might reasonably be regarded as affecting their wellbeing.

A ‘relevant person’ is your spouse or civil partner, or a person you are living with as a spouse or civil partner

If you have a non-pecuniary interest in any business of the Authority and you are present at a meeting of the Authority at which the business is considered, you must disclose to that meeting the existence and nature of that interest whether or not such interest is registered on your Register of Interests or for which you have made a pending notification.

Asset and Enterprise Committee
Terms of Reference

General Powers of Committees

This scheme of delegation sets out the functions of the Council to be discharged by its Committees and Sub- Committees and includes the terms of reference of statutory and non statuary bodies set up by the Council.

Each committee or sub committee will have the following general powers and duties:

(a) To carry out the duties and powers of the Council within current legislation;

(b) To comply with the Council's standing orders and financial regulations;

(c) To operate within the budget allocated to the committee by the Council.

(d) To guide the Council in setting its policy objectives and priorities including new initiatives, and where appropriate make recommendations to Council

(e) To develop, approve and monitor the relevant policies and strategies relating to the Terms of Reference of the Committee;

(f) To secure satisfactory standards of service provision and improvement, including monitoring of contracts, Service Level Agreements and partnership arrangements;

(g) To consider and approve relevant service plans;

(h) To determine fees and charges relevant to the Committee;

Asset and Enterprise Committee

The functions within the remit of the Asset and Enterprise Committee are :

1) To manage any lands or property of the Council and provide strategic property advice relating to the Council's Housing Stock

<u>The Council's Asset Management Plan</u>

1) The acquisition and disposal of land and property and taking of leases, licenses, dedications and easements.

2) The granting variation renewal review management and termination of leases licenses dedications and easements

3) Promoting the use of Council owned assets by the local community and other interested parties.

4) To manage any lands or property of the Council;

5) To include properties within the Council's Asset Management Portfolio including Halls etc.

6) To take a strategic approach to asset management, ensuring that the use of all of the Council' s Property assets achieves Value for Money and supports the achievement of the Councils corporate priorities.

7) To review the Corporate Asset Management Plan annually.

8) The acquisition of land in advance of requirements for the benefit, improvement or development of the Borough.

9) Disposal of land (including by lease) surplus to the requirements of any Panel or Committee.

10) Appropriation of land surplus to the requirements of a Committee.

11) Promote the use of Council owned assets by the local community and other interested parties where appropriate

12) Property and asset management, including acquisitions and disposals not included in the approved Asset Management Plan.

<u>Enterprise</u>

1) To take a strategic approach to commercial activity, both existing and new, ensuring the council realizes revenue generation opportunities and supports the achievement of the Council's corporate priorities.

2) Promoting a culture of entrepreneurialism and building the required skills and capacity.

3) To consider, and approve, business cases and commercial business plans for commercial activity.