

Hartley Court House

DESIGN & ACCESS, AND HERITAGE STATEMENT

LISTED BUILDING CONSENT



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1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This Design and Access, and Heritage Statement has been produced by JETArch Design on behalf of the owners to Hartley Court House. It forms part of a comprehensive package of information submitted for approval for repairing and restoring the roof following significant fire damage.

This document has been prepared to illustrate the design principles and concept that underpin the application proposal. A record has been undertaken of the condition and construction of the existing roof to enable a faithful replication and restoration proposal.

1.2 Site Location and Application Description

Hartley Court House is a Grade II* Listed Building set to the north side of Hartley Court Road in Three Mile Cross. The property is a country house that originated in the early 16th century, having been altered and extended in the late 18th and 20th centuries. The oldest part of the property to the west, consists of part timber frame and brickwork. The front elevation to the house (the eastern elevation) is part of the

18th century extension and consists of stucco, painted string and stonework with three bays including a portico entrance.

The building sits at the far western end of the site with a long driveway extending from stone gates and a gate house at the southern eastern corner. To the north and north east of the main house are a series of outbuildings including a garage, orangery, stables and storage buildings. The remnants of green houses are evident to the south of the stables and can be cleared seen on current Google Earth mapping.

It would appear that historic outbuildings to the north west were converted to a separate large dwelling under planning application 181282 in 2018.

The main house is screened from the long driveway from the east via mature trees and the house cannot be viewed from the street or public realm.

This application seeks approval for the restoration and replacement of the loft space (roof and floor) and windows minus the internal partitions which will be covered under a separate application at a later date that will then deal with the internal works.



Figure 1. Front Elevation of Hartley Court House

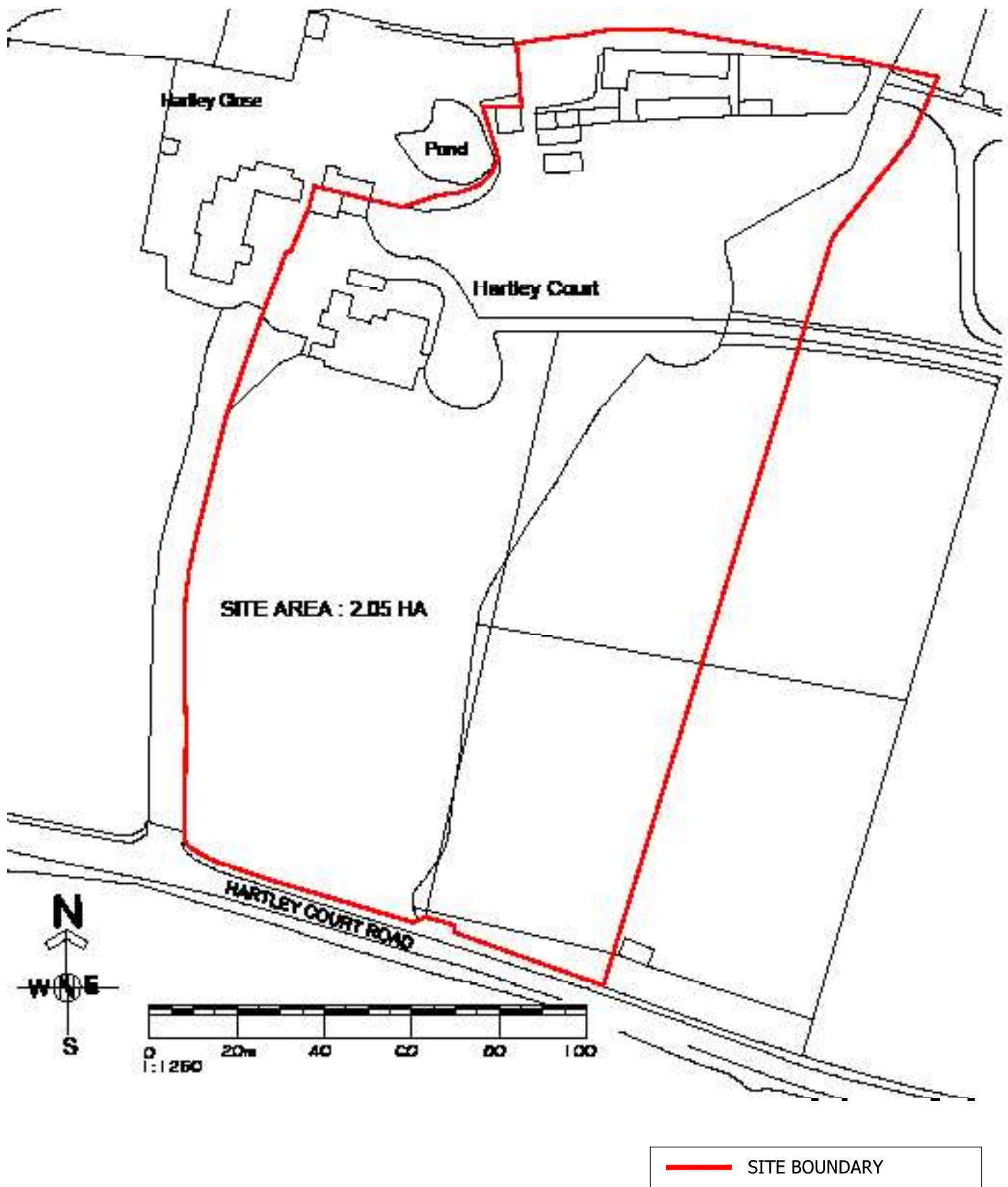


Figure 2. Site Location Plan

2. Site Context

2.1 Background to Application

At the end of 2025, the property unfortunately suffered a serious fire that gutted the right hand side of the front elevation, completely removing internal partitions, floors and the roof. The fire damage, and subsequent water damage from the fire fighting efforts, have now put the property at risk and extensive restoration work is required.

A structural survey and report was undertaken by Pattern Associates to ascertain specific areas at risk and elements that required temporary propping. Photographs were taken as part of the survey and the report has been included in this application for completeness. It is noted that some of these temporary measures have been undertaken on site to try and secure the structure.

The first phase of this project focuses on restoring the roof and ensuring the structure can be made watertight. This will then ensure that the internal restoration work can be undertaken in a safe and dry environment. As the property is Grade II*, there are a number of internal features which need protecting from the weather.

In the interim a timber frame and tarpaulin roof has been installed to minimise rainwater ingress. However, this year has seen unusually high amounts of rainfall and so ingress has been minimised but not completely stopped. The tarpaulin is also non-breathable and so mould has already started to grow with significant amounts noted in the hallway at ground floor, and within the roof space. The windows have been left open to allow for maximum airflow. It was agreed with the heritage officer that these should remain open and unblocked. We concluded that this is acceptable as long as the scaffolding remains as it provides some protection to the first floor windows.

This application will therefore cover the approval for the restoration and replacement of the loft space (roof and floor)

and windows minus the internal partitions which will be covered under a separate application at a later date that will then deal with the internal works

2.2 Site Survey February 2026

On 09th February 2026 a survey of the roof space was undertaken by James Taylor of JETArch Design Ltd. Photographic evidence of the rooms at ground through to second floor was collected, and dimensions taken of existing roof timbers. This included wall plates, joists, rafters, ridge boards, purlins, ties and attic walls. The aim of this was to collate a record of the existing timbers that would need to be replicated and provide a template for the restoration of the roof.



Figure 3. Collection of Site Survey Photographs 09.02.26



Facing brickwork to gable end of room SF3. The window to the staircase is visible. Note how the flank wall between SF3 and SF2 is a single skin brickwork wall and so exhibits a running bond. This is the gable noted in the structural engineers' report as needing supporting.



Here is the sash window to room GF5 from the exterior and then interior. The windows that require replacement will use the existing windows as a template. Under a previous application to the property some of the windows were replaced from UPVC back to timber sash windows. The same window supplier would be recommended for this application.



Facing brickwork to gable end of room SF3. The window to the staircase is visible. Note how the flank wall between SF3 and SF2 is a single skin brickwork wall and so exhibits a running bond. This is the gable noted in the structural engineers' report as needing supporting.

Right image: internal door to second floor loft space. The door exhibits original ironmongery with a 6 panelled leaf.



Undamaged ceilings to room SF7 showing sloping ceilings following rafter lines, and flat ceilings boarding the underside of ties.

3. Heritage Statement

Hartley Court House is a Grade II* Listed Building set to the north side of Hartley Court Road in Three Mile Cross. The property is a country house that originated in the early 16th century, having been altered and extended in the late 18th and 20th centuries. The oldest part of the property to the west, consists of part timber frame and brickwork. The front elevation to the house (the eastern elevation) is part of the 18th century extension and consists of stucco, painted string and stonework with three bays including a portico entrance.

The Listed Building the subject of this application is known to Historic England as 'Hartley Court, Hartley Court Road'. For the purposes of assessing curtilage it was listed on 26th January 1967. It is Listed as Grade II* under List Entry Number 1319124.

The official Listing states:

SHINFIELD HARTLEY COURT ROAD (north side) SU 76 NW Great Lea Common

8/31 Hartley Court

26.1.67 II*

Country house. Early C16, extended late C18, altered C20. Part timber framed with painted brick infill, part painted brick, part stucco, some vertical clay tiling. Old tile roofs of varying heights some gabled, others hipped. Irregular plan. 2 storeys and a cellar and part 2 storeys and attics. 3 groups of 3 and 4 clustered shaft chimneys, with offset heads, one C19 chimney and one C16 large chimney with bread oven on the north wall. Entrance front: painted string at first floor level, moulded eaves cornice to hipped roof. 3 bays sash windows with glazing bars and segmental heads; outer bays tripartite. 2, C20 square bays on ground floor with similar windows but with square heads; C20 central enclosed entrance porch between with centre door. Garden front: similar but with 5 bays of sash windows with

glazing bars in alternating bays of single and tripartite on first floor. On ground floor similar tripartite windows alternating with glazed garden door and single sash window. Sun dial on wall over string course to right of centre. Small lean-to tiled roof extension on left. Rear of house is very irregular with combination of wall materials and timber frame exposed; small one storey C20 extension. Interior: Staircase with stick balusters and wreathed handrail. In the study a fine C16 wooden overmantle and fire surround intricately carved with floral motifs; late C18 Delph tiles on cheeks of fire surround; C16 panelling in same room. 2 large trusses exposed in roof with arch braces to collar remaining. V.C.H. Vol.3. p.261. B.O.E. (Berks) p.216.

Pevsner et al in the 2010 version of 'The Buildings of England – Berkshire' comments on Hartley Court as follows:

"Hartley Court, 2/3 m. NW next to the M4 motorway. The core is early c16, timber-framed, and probably built by Thomas Beke, whose family's arms feature in an overmantel in the former solar. But the front is late c18, white hipped-roofed, of five bays, with the first, third and fifth tripartite."

The 1923 Victoria History of the County of Berkshire Volume III agrees with Pevsner and confirms the connection to Thomas Beke.

"Another manor of Hartley, called also Hartley Court is mentioned in 1525, at which time it was held by Sir Edmund Bedingfield and Grace his wife in right of Grace, who was daughter and heir of John Russell (fn. 74); they quite claimed their interest in it to John Baldwyn and others, (fn. 75) who conveyed it to Thomas Beke of Earley Whiteknights, (fn. 76) the descent of which manor (q.v.) it followed till 1832. (fn. 77) it was afterwards bought by Mr. Benyon.

The capital messuage of Hartley Court was held in 1609 by Sir Thomas Smyth, who left it by his will to his Son Robert, with

successive remainders to his daughter Margaret for life and to his brother Richard. (fn. 78) Robert died childless in 1625, and was succeeded by his sister, then only seventeen, the wife of Thomas Cary. (fn. 79) Richard Smyth conveyed it by fine to Thomas Fisher in 1652. (fn. 80) In 1659 it was held by Margaret Herbert dealt with it in 1668. (fn. 82) Hartley Court was bought

by 'Deane a pinmaker and haberdasher of Reading.' He died about 1795 and his daughter Anne married her cousin Charles M. Deane. (fn. 83) They were living there in 1805, (fn.84) and in 1843 Mrs. Cooper occupied it. (fn. 85) Later Mr. Richard Benyon bought it.

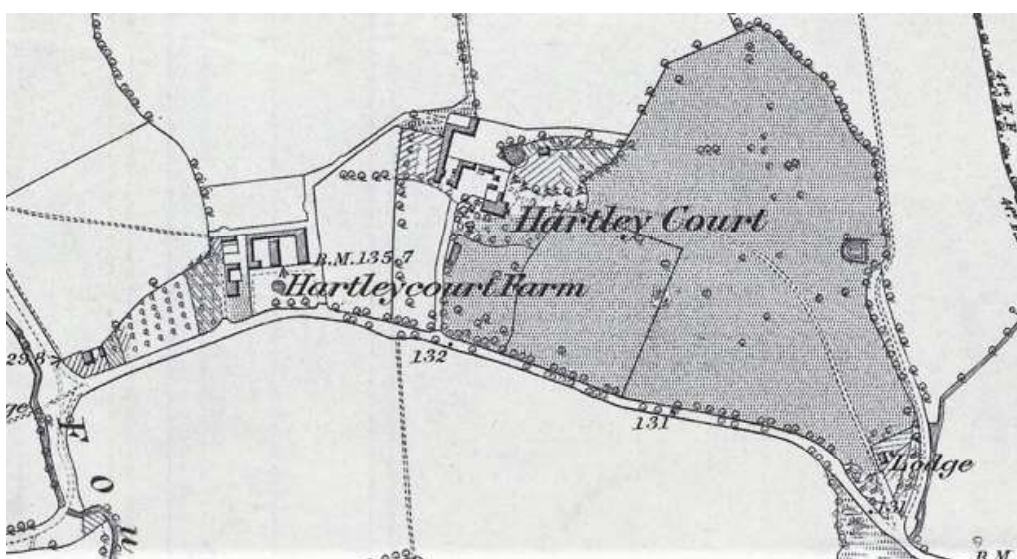


Figure 4. 1883 OS Map showing Hartley Court House and the surrounding outbuildings. The second service access can be seen from the south west of the site



Figure 5. Photograph of the front elevation britishlistedbuildings.co.uk

4. Design Proposals

4.1 Proposal Overview

As previously noted, the first phase and subject of this application is to restore and replace the roof to enable the structure to be weather tight. A survey was conducted on 09th February 2026 under fair and dry weather conditions. Access to the roof space was achieved where a survey was undertaken of the affected areas. Where the timber structure of the roof was accessible, a survey documented the types and sizes of timbers to allow for accurate replication of the structure. It was noted that in room SF5 there are two trusses, one arched that do not seem to appear anywhere else in the roof space. The survey information undertaken in 2018 indicates that the rest of the rooms at second floor have cut rafters with sloping and

flat ceilings. Photographs of room SF7 were undertaken on 09/02/26 showing how these ceilings would appear. Photographs from the same visit show all of room SF1 missing, significant damage to room SF2 and most of SF4 missing. The majority of surveying was undertaken in room SF5 which is contemporary to the rest of the front elevation.

A selection of roof tiles has been rescued and stored to one side, however there are nowhere near enough to cover the roof. Closest matches will need to be found, however the existing tiles do not exhibit any makers marks and so the best fit would be a heritage reclaimed clay tile.

The existing timbers have been assessed on site and the following general findings noted. The majority of timbers



Figure 6. A broken tile from the roof. Evidence of torching can be seen with a mortar and straw mix

are pitched pine, with very few members being later softwood. It is noted that it looks like the ceilings in room FF2 were replaced at some point as the battens supporting the ceiling are modern day softwood battens. The only other roof timber of note to be a later softwood are the ties.

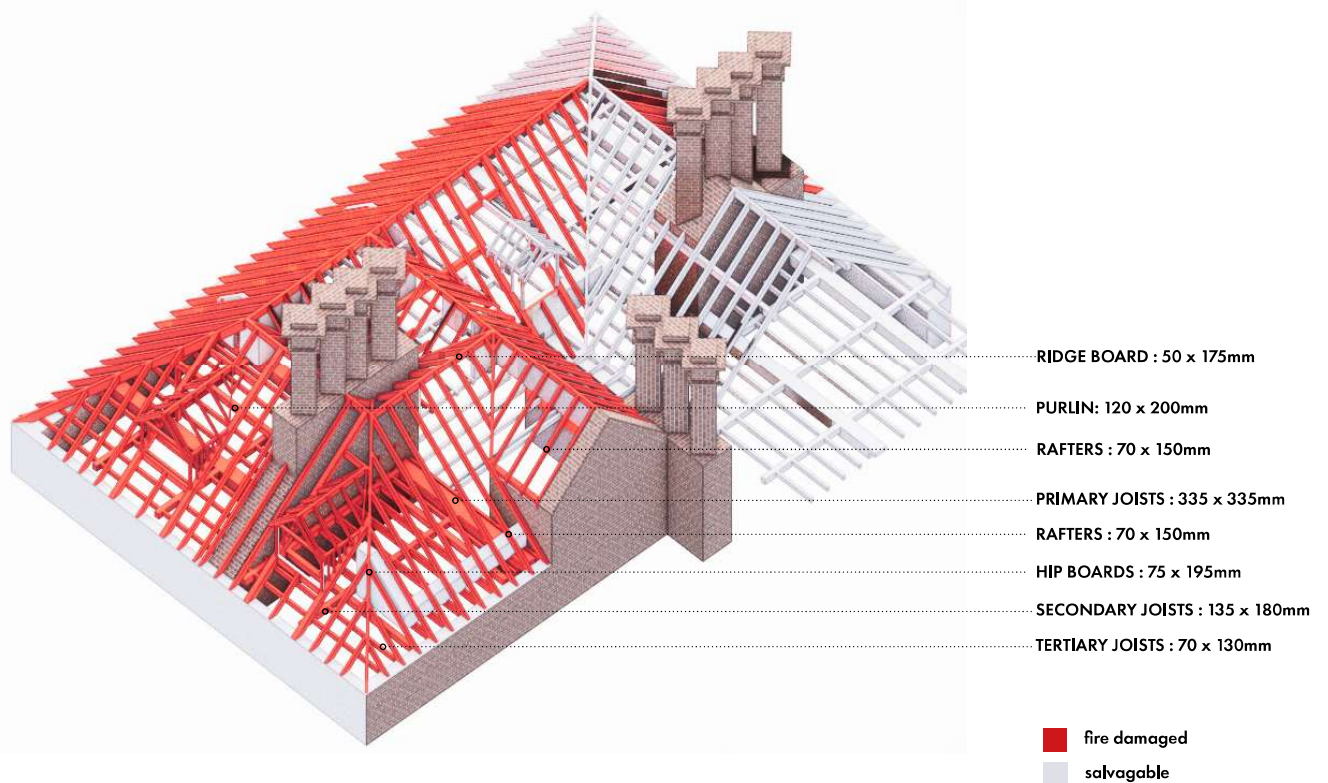
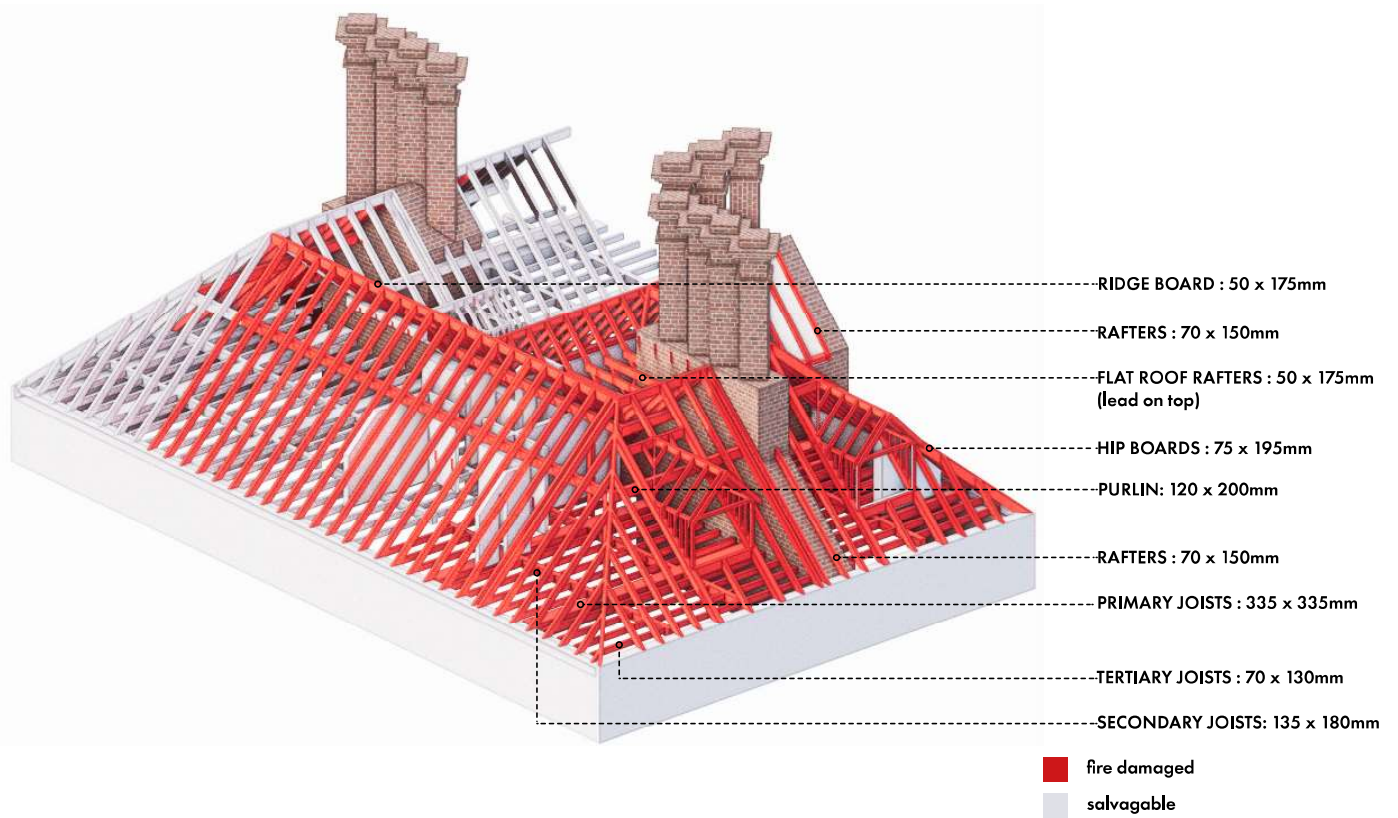
We have put together a 3D reconstruction of the timbers for the roof in the following images. These set out the construction for the traditional cut rafters as well as their sizes based on the survey information covered in Section 2.2. Looking at the photographs taken by the structural engineer and from the survey on 09th February it would be assumed that larger timber beams spanned front to back in two locations with secondary beams spanning between. The larger beams appeared broken in half on site. Measurements were taken on site of the secondary beams which spanned approximately 2.5m. The central tenon of full width with housed soffit shoulder and peg detail is clearly evident on the salvaged timbers (figures 7 & 8).

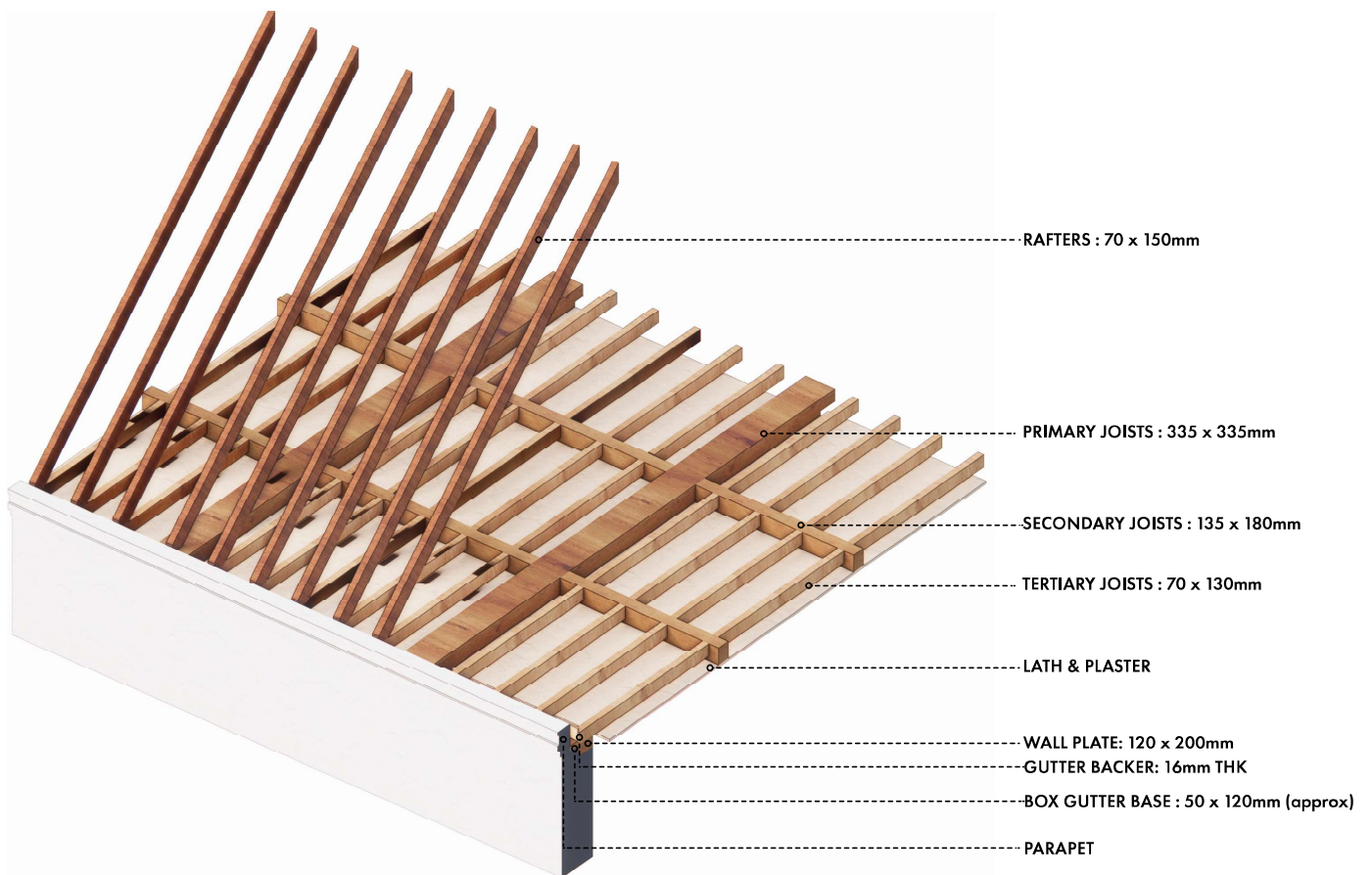
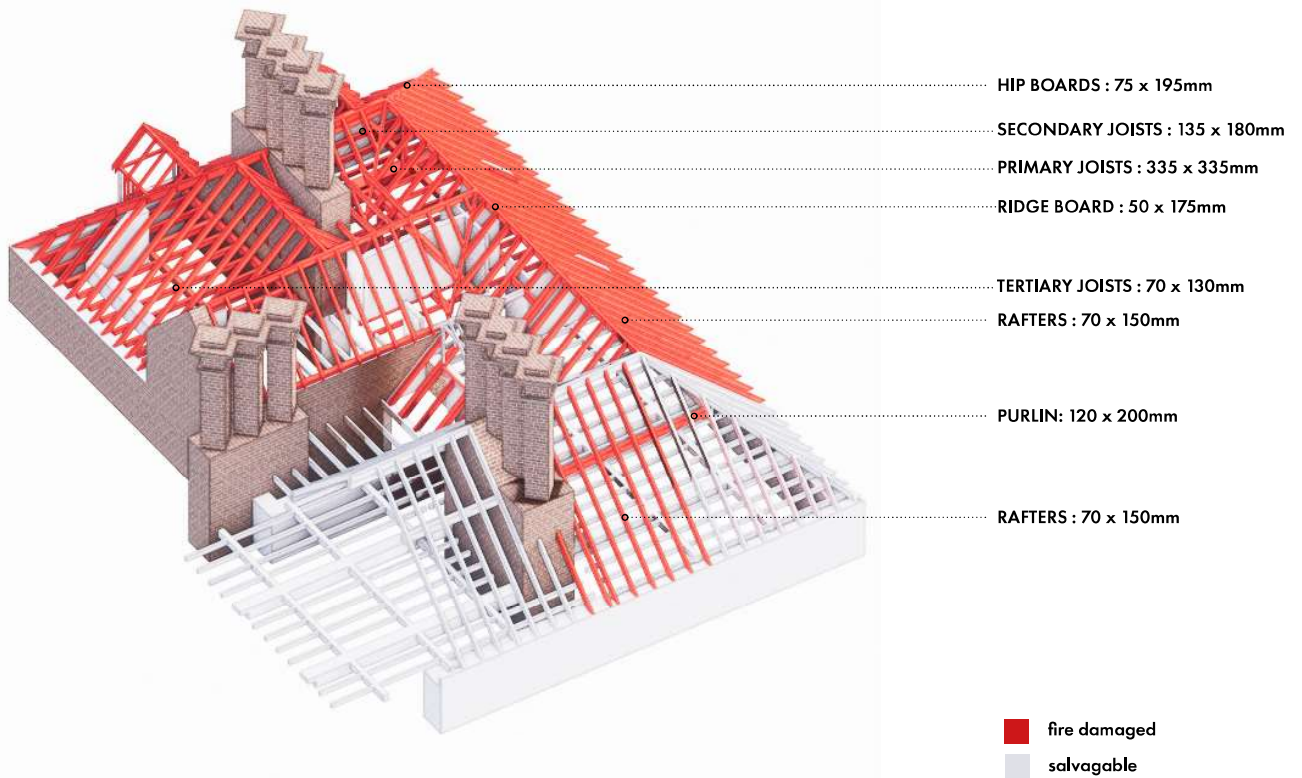


Figure 7. Tenon detail to floor beam



Figure 8. Tenon detail to floor beam





These images demonstrate the roof structure and how it will be rebuilt in the same style as the original roof. There will be a combination of timber framing and beams for the floor of the loft space and cut rafters for the roof. The image top left notes the sizes of the timbers that were measured on site. The image bottom right indicates how the flooring and rafters span onto the external wall. Note the parapet with gutter detail.

The primary and secondary joists have been sized based on the existing joists, however these will have final approval via the structural engineer.

4.2 New Windows

In total there are windows that need completely replacing with others only requiring restoration work. Refer to the floor plans for window references.

Ground Floor:

W1: 1no. bay window to room GF4 – window in fair condition, sash needs replacing, strip paint and repaint, repair architraves

First floor:

W2: 1no. window to front elevation of room FF13 – window partly protected by secondary glazing. Frame to be stripped and repainted, broken panes replaced.

W3: 1no. window to side elevation of room FF13 - frame to be stripped and repainted, broken panes replaced.

W4 & W5: 2no. windows to side elevation of room FF12 – window completely destroyed. To be replaced with like of like timber sash. Refer to window details for further information.

W6: 1no. window to rear elevation of room FF12 – window completely destroyed. To be replaced with like of like timber sash. Refer to window details for further information.

Second Floor:

W7: 1no. dormer window to side elevation of room SF1 - window completely destroyed. To be replaced with like of like timber casement. Refer to window details for further information.

W8: 1no. dormer window to side elevation of room SF2 - window completely destroyed. To be replaced with like of like timber casement. Refer to window details for further information.

W9: 1no. window to rear elevation of room SF3 - frame to be stripped and repainted, broken panes replaced.

In 2017 a number of windows were replaced and subsequently approved under a previous planning application. These were to rooms GF9, GF10, GF11 and FF4 and were accepted by the previous officer Giles Stephens. They were templated and constructed by Leigh Joinery, who would be appointed again to use their previous templates to create copies of the originals for all the windows that need replacing.

The image to the right is of the window to room FF4 which was replaced previously by Leigh Joinery.



Figure 9. Previously restored window to toom FF4

4.3 Schedule of Works

General roof space:

1. All damaged timbers to be assessed and removed if structural integrity is compromised.
2. Roof tiles to be removed from the edges of damaged areas to allow for relaying once new joists have been installed. Tiles to be collected and stored safely for future use.
3. Leadwork and linings to parapet gutter to be removed carefully and parapet assessed further for any damage.
4. Remaining debris (floor boards, timbers, plasterboard etc. that cannot be assessed or reused) cleared from site and structure cleaned to allow fixings of new structure.
5. Timber floor beams templated and replicated to form loft floor framing. 70mm x 130mm floor joists to be laid between beams. Refer to roof 3Ds for construction.
6. Rafters, purlins, attic walls, ridge boards etc. all to be installed. Refer to roof 3D for construction.
7. Install insulation between and below new rafters and batten out to allow for laths and plaster on flat and sloping ceiling. Thermafleece natural sheep's wool insulation to be used. Preliminary specification to include 150mm UltraWool between rafters with 100mm UltraWool below supported by cross battens. Breather membrane laid over rafters beneath roof tiles. Full specification to be agreed with Heritage Officer.
8. Install Thermafleece natural sheep's wool between and above ties to sections of flat ceiling. Install one layer of 100mm UltraWool between ties with 225mm UltraWool laid over perpendicular.

Room SF1:

1. Rebuild dormer window after complete destruction from fire. Barge boards to be timber painted white with hanging tiles to dormer cheeks. Refer to the existing dormer window to rooms SF7 and SF8 for replication. Window to be timber casement 3 sectioned with each section divided into 6 panes.

2. Install partition walls between SF4 secondary landing and SF1. Partitions to be 50 x 100mm C24 studs with new split chestnut laths by Mike Wye Ltd or similar.

3. Install 100 x 30mm attic wall partitions to form dwarf walls to loft space with split chestnut laths by Mike Wye Ltd or similar.

4. Dampen Laths and allow 30 minutes prior to applying a 10 – 15mm scratch coat of extra haired Non Hydraulic Lime coarse stuff leaving approximately 8mm on the surface of the laths. Key this coat with a scratch comb and leave to dry and cure green hard in approx. 5 to 10 days (when it can only be marked with a metal tool). Apply an 8 to 10mm float coat of unhaired Non Hydraulic Lime medium stuff to level out. Scratch this coat with a devil float leaving a light scratch ready for the final skim coat and leave until green hard (approx. 5 to 10 days). Apply a 3mm skim coat of Heritage Lime top coat in two passes. Approx. quantities required:-

- 10 – 15mm Scratch coat of extra haired lime plaster 30Kg/m2
- 8 – 10mm Float coat of unhaired lime plaster 20Kg/m2
- 3mm Heritage Lime Plaster 6/Kg/m2.
- Safety goggles and gloves to be used during mixing and application as Lime is caustic
- Use all haired lime plaster within 2 to 3 weeks to prevent hair being dissolved All materials to be supplied by Mike Wye Ltd other suppliers specifications may differ.

5. Prepare a 2 sq.m sample panel of plaster for approval of workmanship by the Local Authority or use a registered Heritage Plasterer (Traditional Plasterers Guild Register).

6. Template and replicate existing battens on chimney and install lath and plaster as notes on studwork.

7. Install new solid timber door and architrave into room. Template remaining doors for style.

8. Install new skirting boards. Template remaining skirting boards for style.

9. Install new floor boards over new floor joists. Use square edged softwood boards. Template remaining floor boards for sizes. Boards to be nailed down to new floor joists with Cut Floor Brad nails.

Room SF2:

1. Rebuild dormer window after complete destruction from fire. Barge boards to be timber painted white with hanging tiles to dormer cheeks. Refer to the existing dormer window to rooms SF7 and SF8 for replication. Window to be timber casement 3 sectioned with each section divided into 6 panes.

2. Install 100 x 30mm attic wall partitions to form dwarf walls to loft space with split chestnut laths by Mike Wye Ltd or similar. Refer to note on room SF1 for laths.

3. Template and replicate existing battens on chimney and install lath and plaster as notes on studwork.

4. Install new loft hatch.

5. Install new solid timber door and architrave into room. Template remaining doors for style.

6. Install new skirting boards. Template remaining skirting boards for style.

7. Install new floor boards over new floor joists. Use square edged softwood boards. Template remaining floor boards for sizes. Boards to be nailed down to new floor joists with Cut Floor Brad nails.

Room SF3:

1. Carefully rebuild gable wall reusing the existing bricks laid in a lime mortar.

2. Existing damaged staircase to be removed and set aside for templating.

3. Install new solid timber door and architrave into room. Template remaining doors for style.

4. Install new skirting boards. Template remaining skirting boards for style.

5. Install new floor boards over new floor joists. Use

square edged softwood boards. Template remaining floor boards for sizes. Boards to be nailed down to new floor joists with Cut Floor Brad nails.

Room SF4:

1. Instal partition walls between SF4 secondary landing and SF1. Partitions to be 50 x 100mm C24 studs with new split chestnut laths by Mike Wye Ltd or similar. Refer to note on room SF1 for laths.

2. Install new solid timber doors and architraves into room. Template remaining doors for style.

3. Install new skirting boards. Template remaining skirting boards for style.

4. Install new floor boards over new floor joists. Use square edged softwood boards. Template remaining floor boards for sizes. Boards to be nailed down to new floor joists with Cut Floor Brad nails.

Room SF5:

1. Carefully remove all plasterboard to the ceilings by unscrewing the fixings. Do not force removal or cause vibration and ensure that all existing laths and remaining plaster are preserved intact.

2. Install 100 x 30mm attic wall partitions to form dwarf walls to loft space with split chestnut laths by Mike Wye Ltd or similar. Refer to note on room SF1 for laths.

3. Install new loft hatch.

4. Install new solid timber door and architrave into room. Template remaining doors for style.

5. Install new skirting boards. Template remaining skirting boards for style.

6. Install new floor boards over new floor joists. Use square edged softwood boards. Template remaining floor boards for sizes. Boards to be nailed down to new floor joists with Cut Floor Brad nails.

5. Conclusion

The scope of the works will reinstate the fabric of the roof and second floor of the Grade II* building to its pre 2017 condition and reinforce its status as a Grade II* listed building, and remove all unauthorised works to the second floor in the process. A scope of works has been included to further detail the remedial work to help satisfy the Heritage Officer that the works will be undertaken by great care and consideration to the listed status of the building. If you feel that an additional site visit would be beneficial please do not hesitate to contact the Architect to arrange access.

In accordance with Para. 189. of the NPPF the level of detail supplied in the Heritage Statements is considered to be proportionate to the assets importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposals on its significance. The proposed works allow the optimal viable use of the heritage asset and both enable and secure the future of the building and its setting as required by the NPPF

