

MEMORANDUM

From:	Built Heritage Officer	Service:	Green Infrastructure
Application No.	260979	Site Visit Made:	Yes (12/05/26)
Address:	The Old Cottage, Pearson Road, Sonning, RG4 6UH.		
Proposal:	Application for submission of details to comply with Condition 4 (structural repairs method statement) of listed building consent 232278 dated 09/01/2024.		
Relevant built heritage condition text.	4. Except for the opening up works previously specified, works are not to be undertaken to make structural repairs to historic timbers and masonry work to each of the building's elevations until a method statement outlining the nature and extent of the repairs to be undertaken for each individual elevation has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Structural works are then be undertaken in accordance with the details as approved.		

Summary Of Recommendations

Further details required which will need to be found to be acceptable for the condition to be considered recommendable for discharge in full, namely:

- That oak is used for the replacement rails and studs of the west gable end, and not a softwood ,
- The arrangement of replaced rails and studs replicate that which presently exists.

Comments

This application for discharge of condition 4 of the listed building consent granted under 232278 and is made following the previous refusal of an earlier application for the discharge of the same condition made previously under 253038 and which was refused due to additional works shown that were considered beyond what had been applied for /consent given for. Those works along with the replacement of the infill panels of the western gable end to be replaced with new insulated infill, as well as the removal of a small non-historic extension off the kitchen formerly housing a boiler. The matter of the small boiler extension has resulted in a separate application being made for its removal for which consent has since been given under 260838.

The newly submitted Condition 4: Method Statement produced by Heritage Reveal and from what was stated by the planning agent in the presence of the owner, at the time of the site visit on 12th May with respect to the structural repair works to the western gable end of the listed building is for:

- Removal only of the existing brick infill panels from below the level of the End-Girt Beam (between ground & first floor levels) with temporary propping (to allow for works to allow)...
- formation of a new sole plate, replacement of the majority of the existing

ground floor studs and rails, along with the replacement of the southern principle post below the end-grit along with repairs to the bottom of the northern principle post and to each end of the end-grit beam.

- Following the repairs to the timber framing, the reinstatement of the brick infill panels and subsequent addition of a lime render coating, and a lime wash finish.

It is understood there is to be no removal of the brick infill panels above the end-grit beam and/or works to the top portion of gable structure. The structural issues and advised need for repair were identified in the CHA Structural Engineers Inspection document submitted under 233378 but those repairs to it and the dropped ceiling did not form part of that application for which consent was eventually given..

With amended drawing no 246714-02-P2: Remedial Structural Works to West Gable

- the areas of shading (in green and in orange) representing the infill masonry and the boiler extension to be removed are no longer shown.
- horizontal rails at ground floor level are now depicted although it should be noted in doing so do not appear to replicate all of these existing horizontal rail timber (as observed both externally and internally) as would expected to be the case.
- The annotation 'new softwood rails and studs on the ground floor omitted for clarity' appears still shown on the amended drawing despite both the studs and rails now shown.
- Under the Timber Notes (points 8 and 9) reference to the use of softwood (seemingly for the rails and studs)

In terms of the details on this amended drawing the matter of the shown studs and rails to be replaced is considered to be an issue here in that:

- The replacement of these element would not faithfully replicate the existing arrangement of the historic rail timbers, as several of the ones not necessary visible externally but visible from inside the building including the rails timber apparently directly under the two windows are not shown.
- The intention for the new studs and rails to be in a softwood, despite the knarled/rutted appearance of the existing timbers seemingly suggesting they are made of oak or some similar hard wood. Furthermore it should be noted in the conclusion section of the CHA Structural Engineers Inspection document submitted under 233378 it is stated that 'all of the studs and rails on the ground floor are renewed (in oak)'. As such there is the expectation here for the repairs to be in oak and not a softwood. No justification for the use of softwood rather than the previously advised use of oak has been proffered.

Whilst any intended or need works to repair the under portion of the western gable will require the need for consent to be applied for and given for those works.

Date:	10-06-2026	Signed:	Keith Frost Built Heritage Officer
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3.6.3 W3. Structural Timber Repairs

The Clive Hudson structural report on the west gable identifies secondary studs 1-4 as the vertical timber studs at the ground floor between the 'end girt' (see Fig.1 for reference).

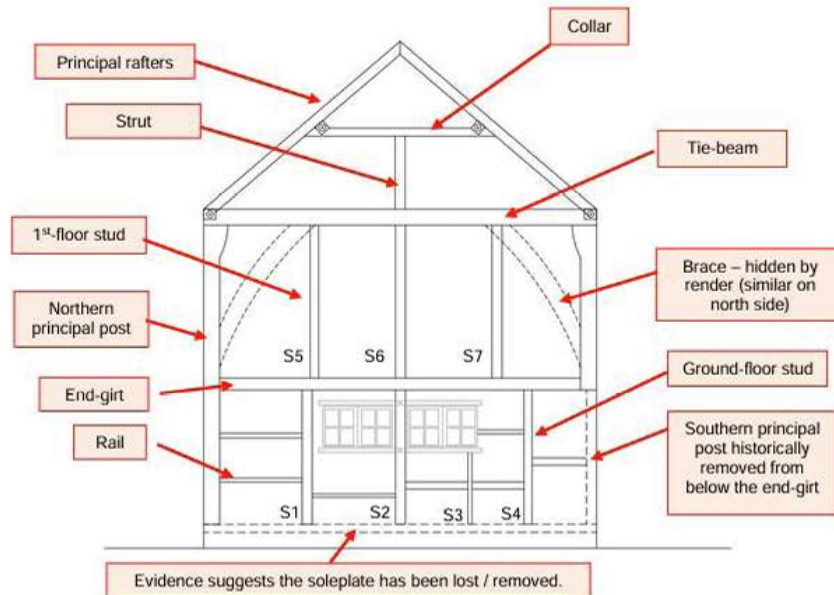


Figure 6. Elevation of the west gable with constituent elements of the timber frame indicated

Fig. 1: Extract from the Clive Hudson Associates' structural report on the west gable

Extract from Heritage Revival Method Statement – here it should be noted the braces at first-floor level previously hidden under the cementitious render finish have now exposed along their lengths (along with directly adjacent brick infill) as a result of the render covering them. Furthermore, removal of the existing render covering for the southern principal post appears shows the lower portion severely eroded rather than having been historically removed.

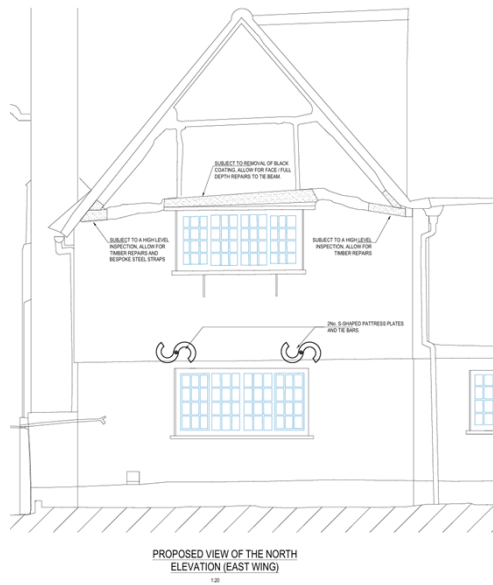


Revealed brace timber.

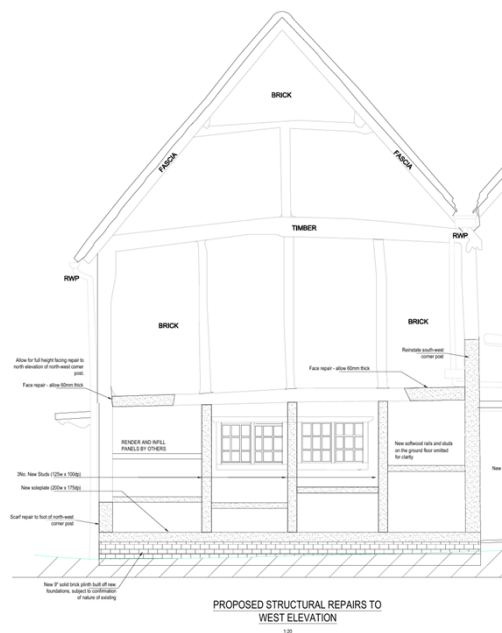


Remains of lower portion of southern principal post.





Gable on North Elevation



West Gable End – phot shows the braces have now been exposed



Reversed image of the interior view -so as to match with external drawing above