

Heritage Statement

Radwell Grange, Great North Road, Baldock, SG7 5EU

Reroofing of a grade II listed house and the introduction of 1 no. dormer and 2 no. conservation roof lights.

January 2025

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 The following report has been prepared for Nick Bridgeman in support of a listed building consent for the reroofing of Radwell Grange, and the introduction of 1 no. dormer and 2 no. conservation rooflights.

1.3 Radwell grange is a Grade II listed Farmhouse

1.3 The present owners have been in occupation for 8 years and have been patiently restoring the house and bringing it up to a habitable condition through a series of listed building consents. Much of the work has been undertaken by themselves.

1.2 In line with Paragraph 207 of the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the Heritage Statement is intended to advise North Hertfordshire District Council (NHDC) regarding the impacts on the character, and hence the significance, of the listed farmhouse arising from the proposed works.

1.3 This application is supported by

0533-001-P1 Site Location Plan
0533-100-P1 Existing Plans and Elevations
0533-101-P1 Proposed Plans and Elevations

2.0 Site Description and Context

2.1 Radwell Grange Farm lies approximately 500m to the east of the Great North Road and 1.4km north of the core of the hamlet of Radwell. The name suggests its origins as a manorial farm.

2.2 Radwell Grange Farmhouse is Grade II listed (ref. 1102673). The listing description, based on an original survey by the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England (RCHME), states:

House. Possibly C16 core to predominantly mid C17 main range. Extended and altered C19. Restored C20. Timber frame and brick, roughcast, tiled roof. L shaped. 2 storeys and attics. 3 window front with a central entrance. C19 multiple pane glazing bar sashes with a small ground floor bay window to right. Right hand red brick return wall. Large external C17 gable end stack stepped up to two diagonally set square brick shafts. 2 small chamfered brick mullioned windows with hood moulds flank stack at first floor. Left return has hipped outshut in angle with rear wing. Small gable in roof of this wing over secondary entrance. Behind this gable and attached to rear of main range is the main, possibly C16, stack with 5 shafts, 2 pairs of diagonally set squares and one a star on plan. Rear wing extended by a lower addition. Tall gabled wing in inner angle, originally a staircase wing, has a 2 light wooden ovolo moulded mullion in attic. Interior: original

brick fireplaces exposed. Moulded head to jowled post in rear wing. Clasped purlin collar beam roof trusses, originally with crown post. Much altered in C19, especially in main block.

2.3 The RCHME Selective Inventory of Hertfordshire Houses (Smith 1993), provides a little more detail:

Radwell Grange (TL 235371) is predominantly of the mid-17th century but extensive mid-19th-century alteration obscures its development, which may result from piecemeal rebuilding of an earlier house. The exterior is wholly rendered except for the external chimney-stack and gable-end wall to W. The L-shaped plan comprises a main range facing N and a rear wing to E; in the N range is the hall with a cellar beneath to E and a parlour to W; the hall and room to S, probably a parlour rather than a kitchen, because it has a cellar beneath, shared a common chimney-stack; adjoining the stack to W, in the re-entrant angle, is a staircase turret leading to first floor and attics. To S again is a wider and lower block of square plan, with indications in the S wall to E of a fireplace wider than the present one, as if for a kitchen; possibly it had only a partial upper floor; exposed framing is of mid-17th century appearance. The only other datable details are the first-floor windows in the gable wall to W, of two lights, and the chimney-stacks and shafts; all are compatible with the payment for nine hearths by John Paine 'in the Grange house', 23 April 1663, although one hearth is unaccounted for. Hints of piecemeal rebuilding are: the brick W gable appears to be added to earlier framing because it has a higher plinth and the first-floor windows are slightly above the eaves; the attic floors of the main range are at different heights; to E, for about 6 ft 6 ins (2.0 m) the roof of the main range has lower eaves and pitch than to W, its N slope rising as a lean-to against the N end of the wing roof; and the battering-back of the S face of the internal chimney-stack, which suggests a date c1600 or earlier. Conjecturally a three-cell medieval house, represented only by the low eaves to E, had a wing added to S with a chimney-stack serving both hall and wing - hence the battering stack. The mid-17th century rebuilding created a house with three parlours, one of them the former hall, so necessitating a new kitchen to S; the chimney-stack to W was added and the upper part of the internal stack rebuilt.

In the 19th century windows were renewed throughout: a wide staircase with an entrance-lobby at its foot and rising to the first-floor landing in the turret, was inserted between the hall and the parlour to W; and the end block to S became a scullery and pantry.

3.0 Significance

3.1 Radwell Grange Farm is considered to be a heritage asset, being a 'building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest' (Historic England Heritage Protection Guide). It includes two listed buildings, which form 'designated' heritage assets under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the farmstead forming an 'undesigned' heritage asset, by virtue of its inclusion in the Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record (refs. HER 6338, HER 15909, HER 11036).

3.2 The significance of a heritage asset may be considered in terms of its aesthetic, evidential, historical, or communal values (English Heritage Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance).

- Aesthetic value derives from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place.
- Evidential value derives from the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity.
- Historical value derives from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present.
- Communal value derives from the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory.

The significance of Radwell Grange Farm is derived principally from its evidential and historical values, in terms of the 16th century core of the farmhouse suggesting that the farm dates, at least, to the late medieval period. Consideration should also be given to the aesthetic value of the house, as an attractive example of much altered post-medieval farmhouse in a traditional rural setting.

4.0 Proposals

4.1 The works propose the reroofing of the existing roofs which are in a decaying condition and require attention. The existing roof comprises of 4 gabled sections and a singular hipped section. Gables are typically formed with undercloaks and eaves boards, eaves are generally formed with a mixture of soffit boards and open ended rafters. Ridges are half round and abutments are formed with tiled haunching. The proposals seek to replicate these details like for like.

4.2 The proposals seek to introduce 2 no. conservation roof lights, both of the roof lights are set above staircases to introduce natural light and ventilation. Both fittings would be conservation roof lights to match those already installed within the house.

4.3 The proposal seeks to introduce a new dormer window within the northern elevation of the southern most range.

5.0 Impact

5.1 Radwell Grange is considered to be largely mid-17th century in date but possibly having a 16th century core. It was extensively extended and altered in the 19th century, including the wholesale renewal of the windows. The basic roof structure would appear to date to the 17th century with the southern most wing being 19th century. The principal roof incorporates dormer windows lighting the attic space in the front range and the middle wing. The introduction of a new dormer window to the northern elevation of the southern most wing, would drastically improve the functionality of the space and increase natural daylight levels.

5.2 The impact of the proposed restoration of the dormers in the front and side elevations of the house on the significance of the listed building, should be considered principally in terms of its evidential and historical values, with some consideration also being given to its aesthetic value. Using standard assessment criteria, as a Grade II listed building, Radwell Grange farmhouse should be considered to be of Medium sensitivity.

5.3 The proposed changes are limited to the rear roof slope of the southern most range and the south-west facing slope of the rear wing. The changes would have a Minor impact on the evidential value of the building, through the removal of an element of the 19th century remodelling, and a Negligible impact on its historical and aesthetic values.

5.4 The whole sale restoration and reinstatement of the roof tiles is considered to be necessary given the existing roof condition. The existing roof is a mixture of modern concrete tiles and poorly degrading historic tiles, provided appropriate tiles are used and details are mimicked the impact upon the building is considered to be positive, securing the ongoing condition of the building.

5.5 On this basis, the overall 'significance of effect' of the proposed changes to the heritage asset, which measures the magnitude of the effect against the value of the receptor, may be scored as Moderate to Minor Negative, which, in terms defined by NPPF, may be considered to be a less than substantial harm.

5.6 This could be adequately mitigated through the archaeological monitoring of the roof alterations to create an historic record in line with paragraph 199 of NPPF, with the resulting archive being made publicly accessible through the Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies service. Mitigation would result in a reduction of the 'significance of effect' to Negligible.

CONCLUSION

The proposed restoration of the roof finishes, the introduction of 2 no. conservation roof lights and 1 no. dormer window at Radwell Grange farmhouse, would prologue the life of the building and increase functionality of the spaces.

Overall the proposed changes are considered to represent a Moderate to Minor Negative impact on the significance of the Grade II listed building, which could be adequately mitigated through the archaeological monitoring of the alteration works and the deposition of the resulting archive with the Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies service.

Appendix A - Photographs



Photograph of the front elevation showing the existing dormers in place



Photograph of the rear showing the existing haphazard arrangement of modern and old tiles



Photograph of the southern most wing where the proposed dormer is to be installed



Photograph of the stair tower where the proposed roof light is to be installed