Philip Hughes MRICS, Chartered Building Surveyor, RICS Accredited in Building Conservation Associates. Sam Wheeler MRICS and Samir Khatri Architect RIBA info@pha-building-conservation.co.uk OLD MANOR STABLES, TOUT HILL, WINCANTON, SOMERSET BA9 9DL 01963 824240

Justification Statement and Design and Access Statement for proposed alterations work at Brockhampton House, Bringsty, Herefordshire March 2019

Site Location

Brockhampton House is located in the parish of Brockhampton in Herefordshire. The house is set in an elevated position on a slight spur overlooking the landscape park which falls away to the south and east.



View of Brockhampton House from the south east.

Building Description

Brockhampton House is a large red-brick mansion of mid eighteenth century date and is listed grade II*. It is referred to as Brockhampton Park in the Historic England listing, and the listing for the grade II park and garden mentions that the house has also been referred to as Brockhampton Court.

BROCKHAMPTON Brockhampton Park SO 65 NE 9/123 9.6.67. II* 2. Mid C18. Red brick mansion with moulded stone cornice and hipped slate roof. Central 3 bays break forward with pediment. 5 storeys. 7 sash windows, the central 1st floor group being Venetian in character and the outer windows on all floors have late C19 broken architraves with Corinthian caps. Corbelled pediment to doorway. Wing at rear with cupola. Some original panelling inside.

List Entry Number 1176659

The eighteenth century part of the house is of seven bays, with the central three surmounted by a pediment. The architect was Thomas Famolls Pritchard (1723-1777) and the house was reputedly built after the marriage



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between Richard Barneby (whose family had owned the estate of Brockhampton for over 400 years) to Betty Freeman. Her marriage portion of £3000 and subsequent further money inherited on the death of her father, allowed the new house to be built on high ground to the south of the original manor house. The landscape park surrounding the house was also created at this time (separate list entry no. 100087).

About 1870 the House was remodelled internally and new window architraves were applied to the exterior (later removed). Further wings to the rear were added in the nineteenth century.

In 1946 the house was bequeathed to the National Trust who opened the original manor of Lower Brockhampton to the public, and leased Brockhampton House to various tenants. These included to a developer in 1982, an insurance company and to a further tenant in 1996. During this final period significant works took place including the addition of the conservatory and the bay window to the Morning Room on the east elevation, the garage block to the north, as well as significant remodelling of the rear of the house to create a new kitchen, rear entrance hall and a loggia style porch.

Copies of the Architect's floor plans from the date of these last works are included in Appendix 1. These show clearly the areas that have been remodelled, what the approximate previous layout might have been and where fabric is potentially of more recent origin.

The lease was assigned to the present owner in 2017.

Proposed Works

The works proposed are primarily composed of alterations and adjustments that will improve the circulation and accessibility throughout the house.

1. Improving movement through the house at ground level.

A number of adjustments to doors and door openings are being proposed in order to achieve better movement through the house. The route from the main Entrance Hall to the Dining Hall (formerly the Rear Hall) at the rear of the house is not straightforward and involves using a side service corridor to get from the front of the building to the rear. This is presumably related to the house's former organisation where the occupiers of the formal front part of the house were not expected to traverse to the rear parts.

The current tenants now use the rear hall as a dining room because of its location adjacent to the kitchen and the Morning Room. With the current arrangement it is not possible to move directly from the main Entrance Hall to the Morning Room and on to the Dining Hall nor is it easy to move from the Morning Room to the Kitchen and this is not satisfactory for the way in which a modern family would wish to use their home. The changes proposed under this heading are as follows:

A New doorway formed through the rear of a cupboard to the west side of the main stair in the north wall of the Hall.

This allows access from the Entrance Hall to the south side of the Morning Room. To create this a new opening is proposed to be formed in the rear of the cupboard through an existing masonry wall.

A new panelled door and frame will be fitted in to the opening and the inner lining of the cupboard will be lined with painted panelling to match. The panelling on the east side will have an illuminated glazed cupboard to provide some background light to this space.



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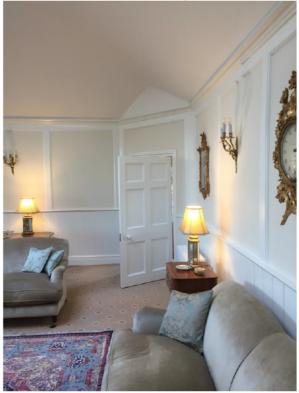
An existing door in the south west comer of the Morning Room that links to the service corridor/ hall will be changed to become a jib door with one face to match the panelling in the Morning Room and the other side panelled.

Where the opening is made new oak flooring, finished to match that in the Entrance Hall, will be laid.



View of cupboard door to the left hand side of the stair in the Entrance Hall.

Insert pics of cupboard + Morning Room



View of angled door and location of new opening in the south west comer of the Morning Room.

New doorway formed through an existing cupboard on the north wall of the Morning Room into the Dining Hall.

On the opposite north side of the Morning Room a new doorway will be created that will allow access through to the Dining Hall. This new opening will be created to the rear of an existing cupboard that serves the Dining Hall which will be raised in height and reduced in width so that the door leaf and frame size matches the other doors in the Dining Hall.

The door from the Moming Room will be a jib door, so as not to upset the symmetrical panelling on either side of the fireplace, with one side to match the panelling in the Morning Room and the other with fielded panels. Within the opening the walls and ceiling will be lined with painted panelling and the opening in to the Dining Hall will have a new panelled door.

New stone flooring will be laid to the floor between the two rooms and this will need to be fitted with a slight fall to suit the change in level between the rooms.



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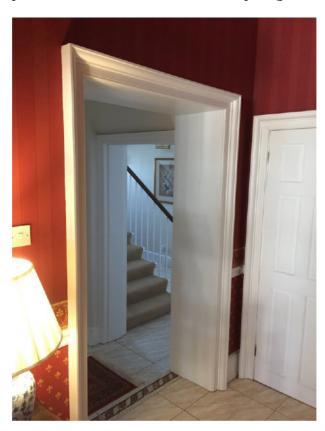


View of the north wall of the Morning Room. The new opening is to be to the right hand side of the fireplace.



View of the south wall of the Dining Hall. The new opening is to use the existing cupboard opening.

New pair of double doors to be inserted in the existing doorway from the Dining Hall into the passage. An existing opening between the Rear Dining Hall and service corridor to the east will have a new pair of panelled double doors fitted within the opening. This will allow more privacy for users of the Dining Hall.



Existing doorway from the Dining Hall to the east service corridor. A new panelled door is to be inserted in to the existing doorcase.



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New door between the Kitchen and the Dining Hall fitted into an existing door case.

In the south west corner of the Dining Hall there is an existing door case without a door. It is intended to insert a new panelled door here. This will allow more privacy for users of the Dining Hall.



Existing doorway from the Dining Hall to the kitchen. A new panelled door is to be inserted in to the existing doorcase.

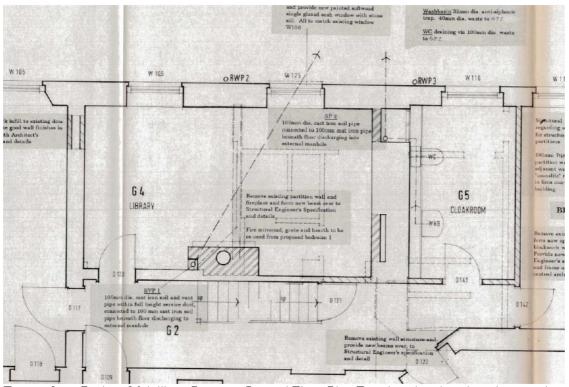
Re-opening of an existing door to enable access into the Library from the Entrance Hall.

In conjunction with the proposals to insert a new lift shaft in to the west side of the building it is proposed to re-open a former doorway that was closed during the 1986 works. The Architect's drawing (see below) of this area indicates that an earlier opening here was closed off.

This new doorway will have a new panelled door, frame and architrave to match the existing door to the library.



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Extract from Rodney Melville & Partners Ground Floor Plan Drawing showing alterations made to form the current Library. The former blocked door is shown adjacent to the door up from the Cellar.

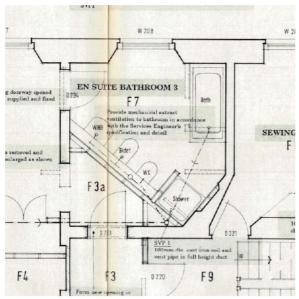
2. Improving movement through the house at first floor level

Circulation on the first floor between the front of the house and the rear is also not entirely satisfactory. There are two routes; either through the main bedroom, bathroom and dressing room or through a narrow angled opening from the 1st floor landing of the service stair to a kitchenette.

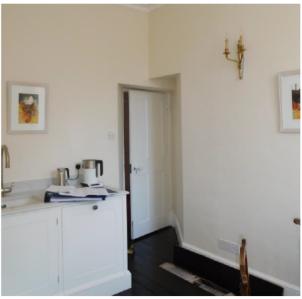
The angled opening is restricted in width because the door cannot open fully. It is thought that the angled wall contains flues from the floor below and the hearth of the first floor bathroom. The Architect's drawing (below) shows a wall of different shape that that currently exists and we believe that a void has been formed to allow a flue to pass from the gas fire below (chimney breast, fire and fireplace added during 1986 works). The plaster to one side of this wall is uneven and suggests that a layer of masonry has been added here



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Extract from Rodney Melville & Partners First Floor Plan Drawing showing the proposed arrangement around the angled doorway. The profile of the angled wall is different to that now found.



View of angled doorway from within the kitchenette. Plaster by angled comer is uneven suggesting an added wall or layer of masonry.

It is proposed to adjust the angled wall so that it allows the door to open wider to provide better access. This will be achieved by carefully removing the outer layer of the masonry and adjusting the rear of the chimney flues by rebuilding them to a lesser depth. This will then result in a wider opening so that the door can open more fully.

3. Insertion of New Lift

It is proposed to insert a lift within a new blockwork lift shaft from basement to second floor level in the western side of the earlier house. In the cellar this is located in the former boiler room. On the ground floor this occupies part of the Library and on the first and second floors the lift would utilise a portion of a bathroom on each level.

Cellar level

The work will include the removal of a raised screed floor and an additional step added to the stair in the basement. The screeded floor appears to be laid over a DPM and the stone floor continues under. After removal the stone floor will be retained. A concrete foundation and recess (approx. 150mm) will be required for the lift and any stones found below the screed will be recorded and their positions mapped before being lifted to allow construction. The stones will then be relaid to suit the new configuration.

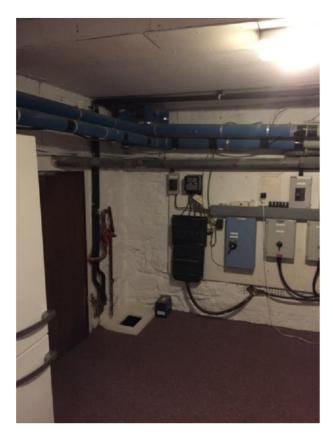


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View of raised screeded floor in the Cellar. Flagstones continue under the screed and are separated by a plastic damp proof membrane.

The position of the lift prevents access to the oil storage tank located to the south and the door in to this is to be closed off with brickwork bedded in lime mortar.



View of store room in Cellar. Door to left hand side is to be closed off to allow construction of lift.



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To allow access to the oil storage room a former doorway is to be opened and a new 60 minute fire door and frame fitted.



View of former closed door in basement. Central part is infilled with brickwork which will be removed to create the door opening.

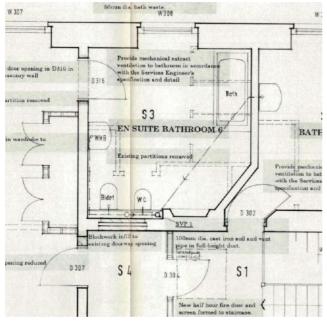
Upper floors

On the ground, first and second floor the shaft is built up in blockwork with its outer face plastered. At ground and first floor the existing doorways from the service corridor and landing will be used to access a lobby in front of the lift. The existing doors here will be rehung on the outside of the doorcase and open outwards. At ground floor there is evidence (where former hinge locations have been made good) that the door was earlier hung this way.

At second floor a former doorway will be reopened and a new door added. The Architect's drawings indicate that an earlier door here was blocked up during the 1986 works.



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Extract from Rodney Melville & Partners First Floor Plan Drawing showing the second floor bathroom. An earlier door between the bathroom and the back stair landing is shown blocked



View of outside wall from landing of back stair at second floor showing where former door is to be reopened to allow access to the lift.

At first and second floor the lift shaft uses space within bathrooms. These bathrooms will be remodelled to suit the new layout.



View of first floor bathroom



View of second floor bathroom



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The lift shaft cuts through existing floor and ceiling structures. Some floor boards were lifted at first floor and it was possible to see that there is a principal beam running north south midway through the room here. This supports joists running east west and appears to be repeated at all floor levels including at attic level where the beam supports ceiling joists.

These beams will be cut and supported from the side of the lift shaft. Any joists abutting the shaft will be cut and supported from the lift shaft.



View of beam supporting ceiling joists at attic level.

Existing ceilings and covings will need to be cut to suit the lift shaft installation. Existing ceilings at ground, first and second floor are plasterboard and of recent installation (assumed during 1986 works). The covings are believed to date from the same period. At Cellar level the ceiling is finished with a boarded material (which is to be tested for asbestos before work commences).

At the top floor the lift needs 2.5m clear headroom and if accommodated below existing ceiling level would mean that the beam above does not need to be cut. This is just achievable if a slight fall in the floor is introduced from the landing to the lift car threshold of 20mm. The floor in this location is a plywood battened floor.

Where the new lobby is created in front of the lift new joinery (skirtings and dado rails) will be added to match that in the hall or landing outside. New comices will be added at ceiling level to match existing comices where new walls are constructed.

4. Addition of Glazed Screens

There is no lobby area between the rear porch and the Dining Hall and this entrance is in frequent use because of its proximity to the rear drive and garages. It is therefore proposed to add glazed timber screens with glazed timber doors set between the existing columns and pilasters of the rear porch.

The Rear Dining Hall has a glazed timber screen to its north face and the new screen to the north will be sized to match this and centred to it. The new screen to the west side will match this and be centred between the columns here.



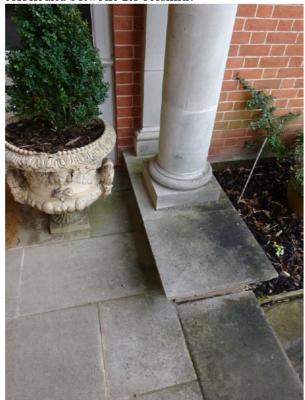
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Views of the rear porch from the north west and west.

Low copings on the west side will need to be adjusted or changed so that they discharge rainwater away from the screen (currently they fall to both sides). They will also need to be adjusted so that they are centred to the screen and between the columns.



View of copings to base of columns around rear porch.



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In addition the path leading to the porch will be raised (it currently takes four steps down and then one step up in to the porch from the drive) to give level access to the porch. The path will be laid at a maximum fall of 1:20 and will fall away from the threshold for a short distance so that rainwater runs away from the screens.



View of path to rear porch

Iustification

These proposals are intended to improve the circulation and movement through the house to make it more suitable for a modern family and to make it usable by that family for many years to come.

Particularly circuitous is the route from the main Entrance Hall to the Dining Hall. The present route involves moving from the Entrance Hall, through the service corridor and then the Kitchen to arrive at the Dining Hall. This means that guests have to be taken through part of the service side of the house which is unsatisfactory. This proposal makes new openings through fabric at the rear of the cupboard off the Main Entrance Hall and from the Morning Room to the Dining Hall. It does however seek to make these openings in a discrete area and in an area that has been subject to earlier modification (refer Architect's drawings in Appendix 1).

At first floor the widening of the existing opening will aid circulation. It is however impossible to improve circulation, eg by forming new doorways or adding corridors, in any other way without causing significant harm to the building. The proposal seeks to alter the fabric where it has earlier been altered and will leave the majority of the chimney flue fabric undisturbed.

Vertical movement through the building is also unsatisfactory and the insertion of a new hydraulic passenger lift on the west side of the earlier part of the house will improve this. The applicants hope to live in this house for the remainder of their lives and the addition of this lift will allow them to do this and continue to access upper floors. The location chosen for the lift is one that has been already heavily modified in the earlier alterations of 1986 and will thus reduce the impact on any historic fabric as this has already largely been lost.



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The addition of the rear porch will make the house more usable; the applicants generally use this door to come and go and to receive deliveries. The addition of the porch is a practical solution to the problems of this current arrangement by providing a covered enclosed space that will cut down draughts and proved a place where deliveries can be received and outdoor shoes and equipment kept.

The house needs to provide for the requirements of twenty-first century living and simplicity and ease of movement throughout the house, both horizontally and vertically, is fundamental to this. The aim of the works is to deliver convenience and accessibility to all floors and areas of the house to all and in particular to anyone with mobility problems.



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Design and Access Statement

Design and access implications for the proposed works listed above have been considered under the following headings:

1. *Use*

There is no change proposed to the use of the building which will continue to be used as a family home.

2. Amount of Development

The proposed work involves the insertion of a lift in the western side of the house, and the creation, adaptation and re-use of a number of doors and door openings on the ground floor. A glazed screen will create a lobby area to the north of the Dining Hall.

The work does not increase the footprint of the building.

3. Layout

Alterations in layout will improve the circulation and movement within the house and are described above.

4. Scale

The overall scale of the house remains unaltered.

5. Landscape

The pathway from the drive to the rear porch is to be raised.

6. Appearance

Joinery

All the joinery will be designed to match with the historic joinery in the house.

Jib doors in the north-east and south-west comers of the Morning Room will be designed to disappear into the form of the historic panelling.

Lift

The lift shaft will be formed of blockwork and finished with plaster. New skirtings, dado rails and comices will be added to match those on each floor. The lift car doors will be finished in stainless steel

Chimney breast

The rear wall of the chimney will be adjusted and rebuilt to a reduced depth. The outer face will be made good with lime plaster. Any alterations to brickwork will use lime mortar.

Glazed screen

The new timber-framed glazed screen will be set back from the face of the columns. The screens will have a glazed door in each elevation with a moulded fielded panel at low level. The screen will be painted.

Access

The raising of the path will allow level access from the drive to the rear porch (max fall 1:20).



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Internally access and circulation around the ground floor of the house will be greatly improved. A direct route from the main Entrance Hall, through the Morning Room to the Dining Hall will be achieved. A new door will allow access into the Library from the service corridor adjacent.

Vertical access to all floors of the building will be achieved by the insertion of a lift.

8. Parking

The existing parking arrangements for the house are unaffected by the proposals.

Summary

The proposals will improve the overall circulation and movement in the house. They will allow to the house to be used as a comfortable and convenient family home thus securing its long-term sustainable use.

The proposals have been carefully considered and designed to retain as much historic fabric as possible and to minimise any impact on significant features within the house.



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Appendix 1 - Rodney Melville Drawings from 1986 Alterations



