

HISTORIC BUILDING ASSESSMENT

**RUNKINS FARM
LANGHAM ROAD
BOXTED
CO4 5HZ**



Introduction

Runkins farm is a detached property part traditional; part non traditionally built. The original central timber frame section that has a sitting room and entrance hall at ground level and two bedrooms at first floor probably dates back to the late C17th. There have been additions made at each side. To the left is a ground floor brick wall extension that houses the kitchen and to the right is a brick built two storey extension that forms the lounge and master bedroom above. Again there is no exact information as to the age of these extensions but they are quite modern; possibly dating back to the 1920's. The property is in generally poor condition.

This report is not a building survey. An instruction was received from Optimum Architecture Ltd. who act for the owners of Runkins Farm Mr & Mrs Allistair Piper-Hunter.

The objective of this survey and report is to inspect all accessible sections and areas of the property and to provide an assessment of any historical value left in any part of the building.

Mr Chris White of Christopher White Associates carried out the survey and is the writer of this report. Mr White has over 30 years experience in property surveying and specialises in historic buildings; he is a chartered building surveyor membership number 1230864.

The property is not listed nor is it in a conservation area.

The inspection

The two extensions have been added to each side of the original property. Both have solid brick walls most probably built using Flemish bond, all external surfaces have a pebbledash render coating. The roofs are double pitched with a timber framework; there is no access to the right side roof structure but the left side roof can be seen to have been formed using machine sawn 100x50mm timbers as a traditional cut roof. This roof has a slate covering; the two storey extension to the right has a composite tile covering which is likely to be asbestos based. Windows are modern timber casement opening with single glazing. The ground floor is solid concrete, ceilings are modern plasterboard and the first floor is suspended timber with modern machine sawn floor boards which has active infestation of wood boring insect.

My assessment of both these extensions is they have no historic value whatever.



The central section of the property has timber frame walls with a double pitched roof clad with hand made clay peg tiles. There is no information as to the age of this section but I would consider it likely to date back to the late C17th. As will be seen; very little of the original fabric remains.

The roof

The roof covering is in fair condition with a number of loose, missing and broken tiles. There are some sections where more than four tiles are missing/broken which has resulted in moisture ingress that has damaged the ceilings below. The covering has undoubtedly been renewed relatively recently possibly around the 1950's therefore it has no historic value.

There is no access to any part of the roof structure.

Ceilings

The ceilings in this part of the property are smooth lath & plaster at first floor and timber beam with infill at ground floor.

First floor ceilings have deteriorated to such an extent that they are considered to be past economic repair. Water damage and general ageing have contributed to their poor condition.

Whist old timbers remain in place at ground floor; the infill between beams is modern plasterboard which has no historic value.



Floors

The ground floor is solid concrete, the first floor is suspended timber.

The ground floor is covered with lino tiles which could have asbestos content. Perimeter edges of the floor have risen and contorted which can be attributed to long term moisture damage. I would fully expect that certainly the edges of the floor and probably all the floor have deteriorated to such an extent as to require full renewal.



The first floor is suspended timber. Floor joist ends are supported by perimeter walls and by a large central beam spanning between walls. The original floorboards have been replaced with modern tongue and groove with no historical value.



Walls

Walls are timber frame and solid masonry.

Bricks and mortar form the front, rear and right side perimeter walls. The left side wall is timber frame. Internal walls are timber frame. All external faces of walls have a pebbledash render finish.

There are numerous cracks in masonry walls all of which have been filled. These cracks materialise internally indicating a past problem with movement in the ground. There is a relatively fresh crack in the front wall indicating a possible current problem with movement.

The render coating is modern cement based and has no historic interest.

There is a serious problem with moisture within the masonry walls which is probably caused by rising moisture from the ground. The line of the moisture is 1.2m high and affects the whole of the right side wall



The timber frame walls are supported by low level brick plinths on which sit timber sole plates. The brick walls are saturated and the undersides of the sole plates have been badly affected by moisture. Fungal spores can be seen growing from the affected wood. I would estimate that as much as 60% of the soleplates have rotted away as a result of prolonged contact with water.



Walls (continued)

The timber frame walls are the only part of the property that are likely to date back to time of construction however; the soleplates which are an integral supporting part of the framework have deteriorated beyond economic repair.



All the infill between timbers is modern plasterboard or chipboard



There are signs of active woodboring insect on timbers throughout the property

Inappropriate additions and materials

A dormer window has been added to the rear section of the roof. This is modern construction and modern materials have been used; there is no historic value.



Windows throughout the property are modern timber frame or metal crittal; casement opening style . None of the windows have any historic interest.



Conclusion

A thorough check of all accessible parts of the property has been carried out. As a result of this inspection; I am of the opinion that none of the property has any historic interest. The two side additions are modern construction using modern building materials; the central section being the oldest part and partly timber frame construction has been modernised with very little of the original fabric remaining. The timber frame itself has significant deterioration and is considered to be beyond economic repair.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris White', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Chris White

17th April 2018