

Summary of discussions in respect of the façade to The Old Croft, Green Street, Holt.

The idea of providing a brick skin to the existing façade in a heritage brick was discussed as a potential option to unify the façade which has been significantly hacked about, previously rendered and then the render has been removed some time ago. (The render remains behind the electric meters on the lower front section). The front has subsequently been covered with invasive ivy for many years which has further degraded the brickwork and mortar. This was mostly removed by my Client to avoid further degradation over a year ago.

I assume the lack of care historically in reforming windows, patching previous openings and rebuilding over failed lintels with dissimilar bricks was due to the fact that the façade was to be rendered.

The patched areas are very uneven and have been carelessly undertaken with little attempt to course in, match the brick or relate horizontal mortar lines. Additionally modern mortar in various differing forms has been used and if the discussed new heritage brick skin is not to be favoured by Daniel Jones then I would propose we revert to the alternative method already considered, which is to take out the poorly patched brickwork and the areas where modern mortars have been used and replace with reclaimed bricks to closely match the original and to rake and repoint the whole façade with a lime mortar which would have a unifying impact.

Whilst we would not allow the use of mechanical rotary cutters to remove the modern mortar I am concerned that this strong modern mortar will damage the arises of the bricks, where clumsy repointing has been undertaken, when removal is attempted even with traditional non mechanical methods.

I would therefore propose a meeting with Daniel Jones to agree the best way to achieve the desired restoration of the façade. It appears that this façade and its impact on the Conservation Area is valued. However, none of the previous Conservation Officers, within the timeframe of this application, have afforded the time to visit the site or been prepared to meet to consider the options until your discussion last Friday. I am grateful for Daniels attention to this matter have only recently taken up the office.

I am familiar with the necessary methodology and can specify the appropriate techniques but would wish to discuss the same to agree the areas to be removed and re-built and the approach to repointing the remaining areas of differing gauge brickwork.

The façade does have varying brick sizes and the left hand section is of a different brick in size and gauge to the right.

There is an eagerness to agree the best solution and agree the best way forward and I would ask that this be conditioned for later agreement to secure an early approval for the majority of renovation and extension works, but that an early meeting be set to agree the best approach.

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When we discussed the possible option in March you were seeking an opinion from the then Conservation Office and this could have been agreed or dismissed at the time (I do understand that there have been several changes of Conservation Officer since then which has caused problems of continuity).

The proposal to provide a new brick skin did not form part of the original submission and grew from our discussions on site due to the observed condition of the historic clumsy repairs, degraded brickwork and the clumsy historic patching.

I attach below two photos that give the general impression of the current condition which may assist in considering the above.

I hope the above will offer a constructive way forward and clarify my Client's desire to achieve the most appropriate restoration of this aspect of the property.

Pete Catherall



