

3590 Cloud House Farm

Design and Access Statement

This report has been prepared to support of a planning and listed building consent application for alterations and extensions at Cloud House Farm.

Location

The site is in Toft Green, near Congleton, sitting in the shadow of The Cloud hill.



Site Location

Site - Context

The application site comprises house and gardens within a working dairy farm. Cloud House Farm has been in the Needham family for five generations. The house is occupied by the current farmer, Robert Needham; the alterations are proposed to accommodate the needs of his young growing family. The proposals seek to make the changes necessary while preserving the fabric of the original house. Most of the alterations proposed will replace or alter work done in the late 20th Century.

The gardens are mature and the residential boundaries are established; no changes to boundary treatments are proposed within this application.

Existing Building

The house is a three storey stone farmhouse, dating from the sixteenth century. The house is Grade II Listed. A historical assessment has been prepared by Garry Miller and is included with this application.



Front Elevation



Rear Elevation – utility room, conservatory and twentieth century outbuildings

The house was altered and extended in the 1970s to create a landing, separate bedrooms and a bathroom on the first floor and add a fitted kitchen, utility and toilet on the ground floor. The conservatory was added in the 1990s.

Design Process

Brief

The current occupant, Robert Needham, recently moved into the house when his parents retired from full-time farming. He has a young growing family and so has new requirements for the house.

The farmhouse kitchen and utility are currently used by the farm workers; they leave outer clothing and dirty boots in the conservatory or utility room. With young children in the house, the Needhams wanted to separate the farm activities from the private family spaces. A new separate boot room and kitchenette was required which would allow the segregation of farm and family activities. The boot room needed a new WC and shower with hot water for the farm workers.

They wanted to replace the utility and conservatory with a garden room leading off the kitchen which would provide a clean, safe and separate environment for the young family. This could be connected to an enclosed external play area to prevent the children wandering into the farmyard. The kitchen at the back of the house, is small and dark; artificial light is required permanently. They wanted to open the kitchen up to other rooms to borrow light and enlarge the space visually.

On the first floor, Robert needed a place where he could prepare for the morning milking without disturbing other members of the family, while more bathrooms would be required as the family grew older. They felt that bedroom 3 was compromised both in shape and natural light and wanted to address these issues in the proposals.

Analysis of Existing Fabric

One of the first tasks was to establish the extent of the original fabric to ascertain what could be altered and what should remain.

It was clear that the extensions to the rear were twentieth century so removal and replacement should not be an issue. The oak screen between the kitchen and dining room had been altered; wattle and daub panels had been removed to install wall lights and wiring. The opening up of the wall above the working plane, with the retention of the oak framing, was considered.

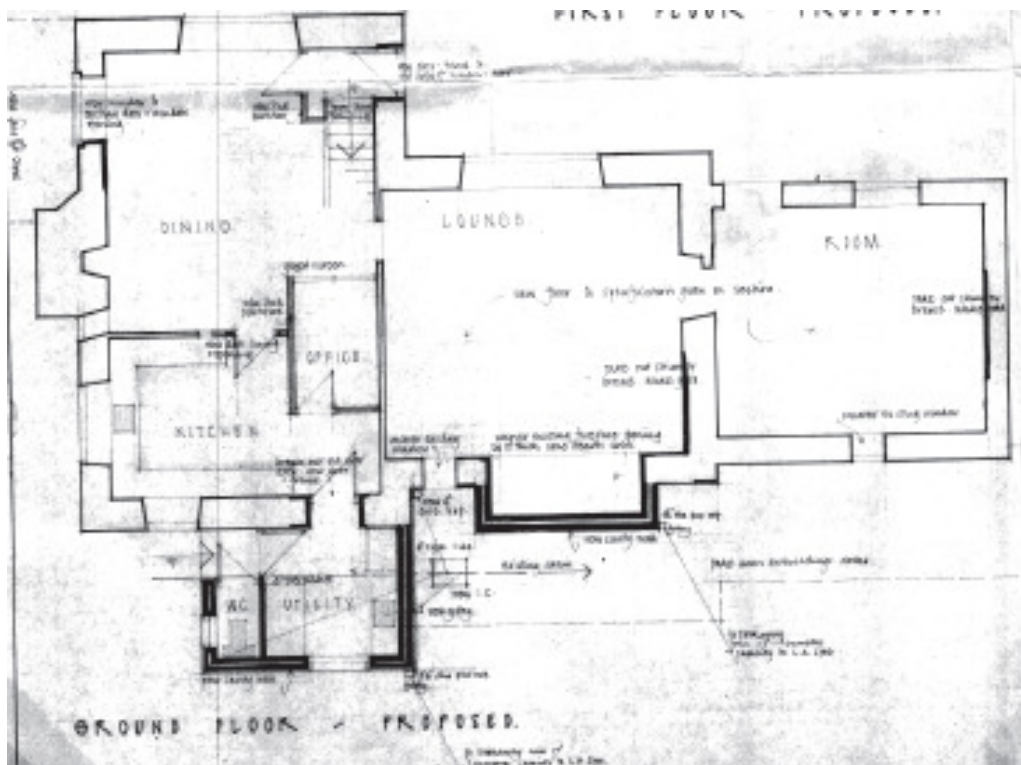
The chimney stack at the rear needed to be reduced to accommodate the enlargement of the window in Bedroom 3. The internal wall on the landing needed to be altered to allow new door openings to achieve two separate bathrooms.

The approved drawings showed that these elements had been added in the 1970s.

Twentieth Century Alterations

Drawing 3590/02 revision E, submitted with this application, shows the changes that were made during the twentieth century. This includes internal alterations and the addition of a utility room and toilet at the rear in 1976 and the addition of a conservatory in the 1990s.

This extent of the 1970s work is shown on the approved planning drawings; copies have been submitted with this application.

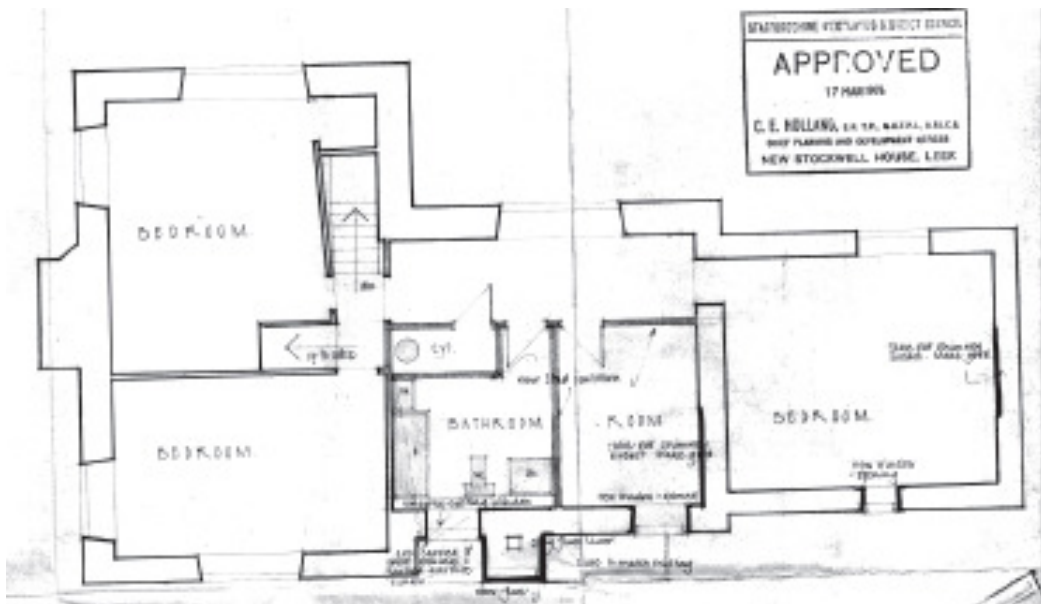


Approved Ground Floor Plan 1976

The scope of work included new ground bearing concrete floor slabs throughout, construction of the inglenook fireplace and chimney, amendments to the kitchen and the utility extension. This proves that the chimney and boiler house, which are to be reduced in size, are modern.

On the first floor, consent for a larger window was given for bedroom 3. This enlarged window is incorporated in the current proposals.

The proposals show the partitioning was added to enclose the bathroom and linen cupboards at this time. This proves that the proposals for amendments to the bathroom layout will not affect any original timber framing.



Approved First Floor Plan 1976

Proposals

Ground Floor

On the ground floor the proposals seek to reinstate the original entrance door and create a new hall to access a ground floor cloakroom for the house and the rear boot room/utility for the farm.

The opening up of an old doorway to the rear of this hall will create a new farm entrance to the house, leading to the Study (farm office). The proposals include the rebuilding of existing lean-to structures in insulated cavity construction to form a heated space. The boot room will allow farm workers access to hot water and welfare facilities.

On the other side of the house, the proposals include the demolition of the 1970s extensions to rear of kitchen (Utility, WC and conservatory) and replacement with new oak framed garden room. The existing dividing walls will be opened up visually by removing the infill panels to the oak framing. The wall between the kitchen and garden room is to be opened between the existing window and door.

First Floor

The existing bathroom is to be split into two rooms comprising a family bathroom and a shower room accessed from the landing. The door is to be relocated within the existing timber frame to allow the installation of a new bath in the family bathroom.

The removal of the existing bath will allow the removal of the partitions which eat into bedroom 3. New partitions are to be added in bedroom 2 to enclose a laundry room. These will be timber stud to allow removal, if required, at a later date.

Second Floor

The two rooms on the second floor were used for staff accommodation in the past and are partly insulated and heated. The rooms are currently used for domestic storage. The proposals include the upgrading of the thermal insulation and heating in these rooms to bring them back into habitable use.

The existing access to the attic is compromised by a bulkhead and trapdoor which were added to provide thermal separation between the first and second floor level. The proposals include their removal and the installation of stud partitions at second floor level to achieve this separation.

Because of steep stair and landing difficulties these rooms are not to be used as sleeping accommodation.



Stair access is compromised by bulkhead and trap door



Existing opening to be retained

Exterior

The existing study window is to be amended to match the stone mullioned window above. The new window and door of the new boot room will be constructed to match the existing openings. The glazing is to be updated where original glass has not survived. The timber opening lights added during the twentieth century are to be replaced with steel casements.

Technical Details

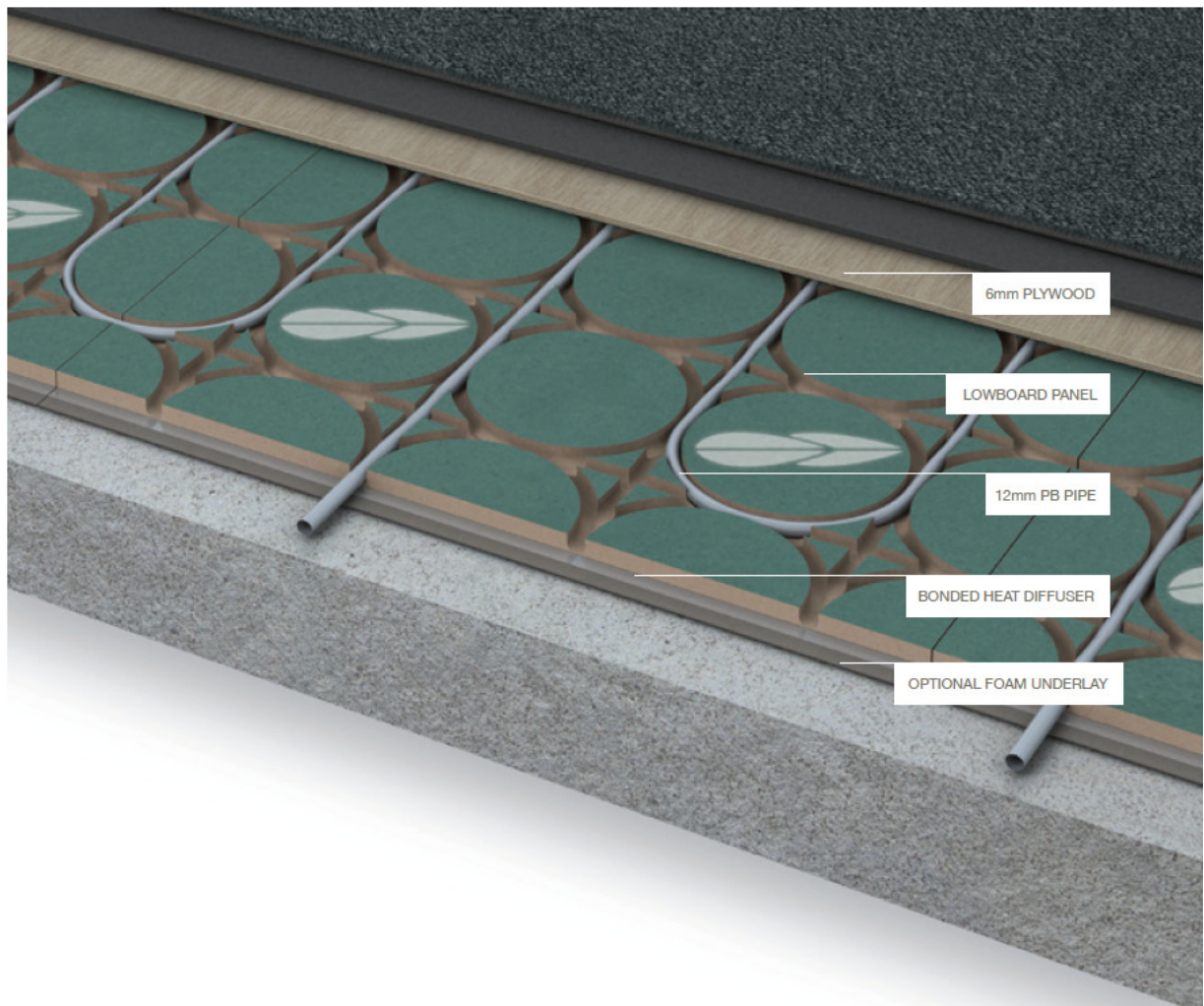
Services

The proposals include a new heat source and heating system for the house. The heat is to be provided by a Ground Source Heat Pump to be installed in boiler house. The ground source coils are to be installed in the field beyond the rear garden, as shown on the proposed site plan.

A slim-line lay-on underfloor heating system is to be used at ground and first floor level, with new radiators installed at second floor level.

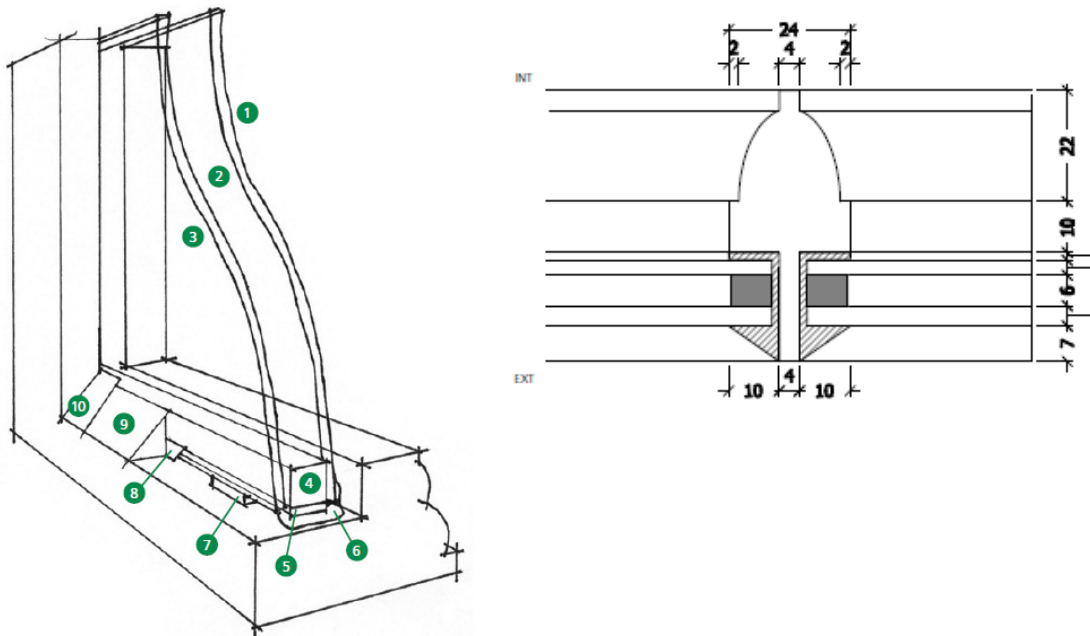
Underfloor Heating

A slim 'lay-on' underfloor heating system is proposed to reduce the disturbance of the existing structure as the installation may be achieved without any amendment of existing ceilings or door openings.



Slim-line underfloor heating system, such as Timoleon Lowboard to be laid on existing floor joists and slabs.

Glazing - Where the window glass has been broken, it has been replaced with slimline double-glazed units. The proposals include the replacement of all remaining single glazing with slimline double glazing, histoglass. All glazing secured by putty will be re-secured with timber beading.



Thin double glazing system Histoglass to be used for reglazing of modern glass panels

Opening Lights – existing timber opening lights, which swell in winter, are to be replaced with steel casements set within the stone mullions.

Window to Bedroom 3 - The proposals include enlargement to the twentieth century window in Bedroom 3. A larger window, as shown on the proposals, was approved in 1976.

Landscape

The proposals include drawing back of the existing raised lawn to create a paved area outside the existing kitchen window. It is anticipated that a light colour paving used here, such as indian stone, will reflect light into the kitchen.

The proposals include the installation of ground source loops in the field beyond the rear garden. The land will be reinstated as existing afterwards and used for grazing.

No amendments to boundaries are proposed.

Impact on Open Countryside and Listed Building

The house is surrounded by farm buildings and mature gardens and hedgerows. The proposed extensions sit over an existing rear extension. Therefore there will be no impact on the openness of the countryside.

As the proposed alterations and extensions generally remove and make alterations to the twentieth century additions, there is a reduced impact on the listed structure. This is investigated in detail in the Historical Appraisal.



The proposals will remove and replace twentieth century additions – the impact will be minimal

Sustainable Development

The proposals seek to adapt a 400 year old house to accommodate a growing young family and thriving agricultural business, to give long-term protection to a listed building.

The proposals include thermal upgrading of the external envelope and renewable heating systems.

Access

Existing Access

The existing access drive leads to hardstanding which forms part of the farmyard.

Proposed Access

There are no changes proposed to the existing vehicular access arrangements.

The proposals for the house include two new access level toilets and a new entrance. The proposals comply with requirements set out Part M of the building regulations.

Supporting Information

Historical Appraisal

A Historical Appraisal has been prepared by Garry Miller, is submitted with this application.

Tree Survey

No trees or boundary hedges will be affected by the proposals; therefore a tree survey has not been submitted with the application.

Protected Species

Although, there is a pond at the entrance of the farmyard; this is more than 200m away from the proposed rear extensions, therefore a GCN survey is not required.

The new extensions will sit on the footprints of an existing buildings and paved areas.

Consultation

Local Planning Authority

A meeting was held with Conservation Officer, Christopher Drage, on 12 September 2010. The Conservation Officer's concerns were noted and investigations or amendments were made, as follows:

Kitchen

Kitchen panelling – the infill panels in the timber screen between the kitchen and dining room have been investigated as requested by the conservation officer.

Only one wattle and daub panel has survived behind the position of the existing hob – this is complies with the approved drawing of 1976 when a series of panels were removed to accommodate a study and new kitchen door.

Chimney/Fireplace

The conservation officer noted that the age of the chimneys should be established. The approved drawings from 1976 show the boiler house and enlarged chimney were added in the twentieth century. Therefore, the removal of these to accommodate the previously approved window at first floor level should not cause concern.

Garden Room

There were no objections in principle to the Garden Room. The proposals include the retention of the existing wall of the Utility Room, which defines the width of the new space, which is symmetrical. The footprint of the new garden room will be narrower than the existing extensions. The rooflights have been reduced in size and number as requested.

Underfloor Heating

A slim 'lay-on' underfloor heating system is now proposed to reduce the disturbance of the existing structure as the installation may be achieved without any amendment of existing ceilings. It should be noted that the existing ground floor slabs were installed in the 1970s.