

EAST LEIGH HOUSE
Bartons Road, Havant

HERITAGE STATEMENT

September 2015

Michael Ricketts Associates

**East Leigh House, Bartons Road,
Havant, PO9 5NA**
Heritage Statement – Sept 2015

1. Introduction

1.1 East Leigh House is a detached, single dwelling house set in its own grounds on the southside of Bartons Road, a statutory listed building dating from the early 19th Century. It is situated outside the urban area to the north of Havant town centre and to the east of the historic pleasure grounds now known as the Staunton Country Park. At present the main house is occupied by a single tenant, but otherwise the large grounds are essentially underused.

1.2 The future of the property is likely to be dependent upon the future viable use of the house itself and its site. This statement considers the listed building in its historic and architectural context, together with its setting and assesses its significance, so as to inform any design considerations and process for the site (in accordance with the principles as set out in National Planning Policy Framework 2012 and any Local Plan policies). It follows on from a Heritage Assets Statement for the building (documented in November 2013) and should be read as supporting information to any Design and Access Statement for the site produced by the applicant's planning consultant Advoco Planning and architects Urban Pulse Design.

2. Planning and Heritage Policy

2.1 The following policy matters are relevant to any considerations concerning the building and its setting. East Leigh House is a Grade II Statutory Listed Building, with several outbuildings, mature gardens and landscaping with substantial trees. Although the site currently lies outside of the urban area and therefore is subject to countryside policies it is, however, allocated in the emerging Local Plan (Allocations) – Policy UE33 and considered suitable for lower density housing development that would conserve

or enhance the listed building and its setting.

2.2 The open land to the south of East Leigh House is also an allocated housing site (UE3b) in the draft Allocations Plan.

3. Site Description and Context

3.1 East Leigh House lies on the eastern edge of the built settlement along Bartons Road. It appears to have been part of a former larger farmstead in the 18th Century, which included a surviving remnant a listed barn which is now part of the adjoining Garden Centre immediately to the west, together with a Lodge, of which the latter is in a state of disrepair. To the east of the site, the development pattern along Bartons Road becomes more sparsely spread as it extends into the countryside.

3.2 The house itself is set well back from the road in private spacious grounds of 1.8 acres (0.73ha) and represents a prestigious design at the centre of the farmstead. The main entrance faces south with bays to take advantage of the wider views across the gently sloping open landscape. The east elevation faces a private garden laid to lawn. The central position of the house on the site together with being enclosed by extensive trees on the north, east and west boundaries still makes for a relatively tranquil setting, even allowing for present day traffic levels on Bartons Road.

3.3 Beyond the main building group with its small walled garden on the northside, there is a 'modern' detached garage building adjacent to the driveway and an outdoor swimming pool.

4. The Building - description

4.1 East Leigh House in the main dates circa 1820s, displaying typically characteristic features such as the shallow pitched slate roofs and refined Regency proportions, built in the then fashionable 'white' (yellow) brick. These are most likely to be early Beaulieu bricks. This 1820s

house is almost square in plan, a two storey block which has been built onto the southern end of an older building, with a main entrance, hall and staircase and three main reception rooms and three bedrooms. A north east wing, includes a kitchen, ancillary rooms with a further two bedrooms above. This is connected to an older building which runs north-south and became the service wing to the house. This is a simpler building with rendered walls under a slate roof and could have been the former farmhouse. Although first impressions suggest that it also could have been a pair of cottages, as there are indications of blocked external doors on the west elevation. At the north end a single storey brick outbuilding in brick and a slate roof completes the west side of a small walled garden in red brick at the rear of the house. This small walled 'kitchen' garden encloses the north end of the building.

4.2 The later Regency build has a symmetrical south front, with three windows across under a low-pitched roof, with a much later large glazed porch in front of a six-panelled door with reeded architraves under a plain fanlight. The brickwork together with the west and east elevations of this main block is in Flemish bond and headers to the curved bays, rubbed flat arches and stone cills. The sash windows are mostly six-over-six and set in reveals. The north-east wing slightly projects beyond the main block and this is accentuated by the addition of a large 'modern' timber orangery/conservatory extension to the kitchen.



South elevation

4.3 The earlier north-west wing appears to date from the late 18th Century or early 19th Century and following the 1820s build became a service wing for the new house. There are signs in the rendered west wall of two former doors openings. Windows consist of large sashes with small panes and smaller later sash windows, together with a rare Yorkshire or Sheffield sliding (horizontal) sash on the ground floor.



West elevation - approach from the drive

4.4 The setting: As already mentioned East Leigh House was designed as a residence of some substance, probably for a gentleman farmer, set in its own private grounds and positioned for both to impress and take advantage of the long views southwards across the open countryside. The site is enclosed by trees grouped along the boundaries and includes some particular specimens within its formal garden. This gives the house and garden a sense of seclusion.

4.5 A sense of expectancy is given on entering the gravel driveway from Bartons Road, with the oblique view of the simple west wing and the eye is taken to the west elevation of the main block. The formal garden space sets off the house to good effect on the three main sides and arrival at the 'pear drop' outside the south entrance provides gives long views over fields to the south. The east elevation of the house looks out to a private 'sunken' lawn, enclosed by the tree on the east side.

4.6 Interior: The floor plan of the main house and the earlier northwest wing

are very much as one would expect. The former with its central hall, culminating with a large staircase under a lantern and with well proportioned main 'reception' rooms either side. Two of these main rooms have contemporary Adam-style fire surrounds. The sitting room has a large alcove on its north wall with mouldings. The main bedrooms upstairs have Art' Nouveau style fireplaces. Most windows still have their existing shutters.

4.7 The focus of the main hallway is a replacement staircase and is a fairly typical late 19th Century or even turn of the century example. It has to accommodate the split levels between the higher front part of the house (by some six risers) and the rear. The lantern above is also a 'modern' replacement.

4.8 From visual inspection the first floor of the north east wing i.e. over the kitchen has been raised to the first floor level of the front part of the house. This has then required a small flight of stairs at the top of the main staircase to access the new level for bedroom 4 over the kitchen. These few steps have a slim piece of shaped handrail and together with the plain square balusters would appear to be more in the style of the original staircase. Below the 'new' kitchen has been then extended outwards as a breakfast room into the new orangery. This and the resulting removal of the kitchen wall and large supporting spans is 20th Century work

4.9 As part of these later works at ground level, an east hallway has been made through a former pantry to a set of french doors leading out to the garden. Between the kitchen and the northwest wing are ancillary rooms and the access to the cellar, which lies mostly under the centre of the building i.e. the sitting room and the old pantry with an extension under the boot room.

4.10 At the first floor lower landing of the main staircase, the floor level is unchanged for the rear bedroom 5 and also to the connecting archway through the rear wall of the northwest service wing to its first floor corridor. This archway looks to be

contemporary with the 1820s work. The bathrooms have been formed with modern partitioning. The fireplaces in the main bedrooms have been replaced in an inter-war Art' Nouveau style.

4.11 The northwest service wing consists of a two main bays one room depth either side of a large central chimney stack. The bedrooms above are served by a rear corridor, at present accessed from the first landing of the main staircase. These have been further subdivided with later partitions for bathroom etc. There are no particular features of note in any of these rooms other than a Victorian cast iron fireplace and some cupboards of mixed quality either side of the chimney breast. Recent information has revealed that there was a fire in the wing some thirty years ago which confirms the amount of alteration. The wing is relatively poorly constructed with the external walls being only single skin brickwork.

4.12 It is unclear as to the position of the original stair. Although there is a 'hidden' internal stair (probably a service stair) in a cupboard whose flight is above the cellar stair and is now covered by the present arrangement of the main stair. The central room at ground level has been extensively altered with encased beams and a new partition to form a part rear corridor.

Comment and assessment

4.13 The current list description (dated May 1952 and amended in 1984) gives sufficient information for identifying the building. The above description is the result of a detailed on-site inspection (undertaken in November 2013 and this has been confirmed by a recent site visit this month) and visual assessment and reflects the nature and character of the listed building and its setting (although as the building still has a tenant in occupation, no opening-up was done and it was not possible to gain access to the roof space). Although it has undergone changes internally, particularly in the area of the main staircase and the rear kitchen wing, the exterior of the two historic builds do not

appear to have changed much since the 1820s other than the addition of a glazed porch to the south entrance and the 'modern' white 'orangery/conservatory on the east elevation (the former is mentioned in the List Description as a large central modern porch). Thus, the house still maintains what it aimed to do and retains its significance in its landscape setting, although there is a general need to give some attention to the garden and the walled yard at the back of the house is in poor condition in parts.

The Future

4.14 In view of the wider proposals for the site and the implications of planning allocations on adjacent land, the future of the building as an individual single dwelling house has been in some doubt for some time in terms of its long-term viability. It was previously under consideration as to its suitability for conversion and subdivision into a number of smaller residential units. This has now been revised in view of the new owner's needs to use the main house as a single office, with only the rear wing being used for residential. Following a Pre-Application enquiry with Havant Borough Council, a revised scheme has now been designed for new residential development on the site, immediately to the north of the house.

4.15 An assessment of this revised scheme is set out in section 6 below, but it is first worth restating the essential character of this listed building and the following elements of significance should therefore be carefully considered in any proposals for the house and its site.

5. The Building's Significance

5.1 The significance of a heritage asset is the sum of its architectural, historic, artistic, or archaeological interest. The following sets out the significant historical attributes of the East Leigh House:-

- 1) The main form of the 1820s polite farmhouse with its main square planned block and north east wing,

- two storeys with characteristic shallow pitch slate roof, in 'white' brick with feature bays on the west and east elevations and traditional late Georgian sash windows;
- 2) The earlier cottage range at the northwest end with its central chimney stack, since subsumed as a service wing, with lined, rendered walls and slate roof;
- 3) The 1820s square floor plan with a central hall, well proportioned main rooms, some contemporary fireplaces and most rooms with window shutters;
- 4) The simple layout of the older service wing with its central chimney stack and cast iron fireplaces; the vertical sash windows and the single Yorkshire sliding sash on the west elevation;
- 5) The formal garden surrounding the house particularly on its west, south and east sides, including a small walled yard;
- 6) The driveway approach and the enclosure of the setting of the house by the surrounding trees which form a landscape backcloth.

6. The Proposed Scheme

6.1 The present scheme for the listed building and the site as now proposed by Mildren Homes has responded to the advice of Havant Borough Council following the Pre-Application Enquiry of earlier this year. There are relatively few internal alterations proposed to the listed building and mostly affecting later work. The main changes are as follows.

6.1 Listed Building: The intention to use the main house for an office use will involve very little internal alteration to the existing fabric and mostly affecting later work as well as virtually uses every room in its present form other than redecoration. Services are already in place including internet. Main changes are as follows:-

- a) The reduction in depth of the large recess in the existing dining room to the existing party wall thickness (this is to accommodate the reintroduction of a stair

behind in the rear wing), still leaving the archway and edge moulding in the dining room;

- b) the removal to some 'modern' partitions on the first floor bathrooms;
- c) the blocking up of a 'modern' door opening between the existing boot room and proposed Cottage 1;
- c) alterations to 'modern' partitions in the rear wing at ground and first floor.

6.3 There are no external changes proposed to the main house. The rear wing with the subdivision into small residences does involve some minor alteration to the west elevation, for example, one new front door in place of a window. The existing end bay is a later extension and there is an additional two storey unit designed to finish and complement what will now be a more prominent north elevation.

6.4 Setting: Previous schemes for housing within the grounds have impinged upon the setting of the house and its garden to the east. The revised design for a court yard scheme of two storey traditional houses is now contained in a compact layout to the north of the listed building. Car parking is to be arranged with a court and to the north east of a line beyond the existing orangery. This will thus retain the main aspect of the house in relation to its garden space.

6.5 Car parking is to be designed in order to meet the needs of the conversion to offices and the housing development by careful positioning within the grounds using permeable natural surfacing to suit the setting.

6.6 Landscaping: The retention of the main trees on the boundaries will be important to maintain the character of the listed building's setting. Thus the 'green' approach from the driveway will still be maintained together with the existing 'open' frontage to the rear wing.

7. Summary

7.1 The revised scheme for this listed house and its site is a significant

improvement on previous proposals. Firstly, the proposed conversion to offices virtually leaves the main house untouched with only a few minor alterations to 'modern' work. There are no intrusive services, or additional floor loadings to be introduced. There are a few more alterations proposed for the rear wing due to the changes necessary to form smaller units. But this part of the building has been the subject of past changes, due in part to a fire, but most of these involve later partitions.

7.2 The external works to the grounds are intended to enhance the setting of the listed building. With the new housing court now located to the north of the listed building and effectively contained within this area, the only challenge was to design the necessary car parking to be as discreet as possible and fit within the landscape of the garden on the north east side. Car parking for the office in the main house will be confined to the southern part of the site related to the existing driveway and 'pear-drop' and south west corner.

7.3 This scheme will also provide the opportunity to revive the immediate landscape setting to the house, which is now in need of some management and enhancement. The external views of the house and its surrounding will not be compromised by the existing proposals

7. List Entry Description

Name: East Leigh House

List Entry Number: 1091643

Grade: II

Date first listed: 16-May-1952

Date of recent amendment: 06-Feb-1984

Details:

House. Mainly circa 1820, with a north-west wing of older date, obscured by rendering and later features. Brick, with a slate roof. Almost square block of 2

storeys and a cellar. The symmetrical front (south) has 3 windows; low-pitched roof with spaced mutules set against fascia, yellow brick walls in Flemish bond (headers to curved walling), rubbed flat arches and stone cills. Sashes in reveals. The doorway is a reeded architrave, enclosing a plain fanlight and 6-panelled door, now enclosed in a late C19 large glazed porch. The west elevation, with similar treatment has 3.1 windows, the north side being a 2-storeyed semi-circle with 3 windows: the older lower wing extends northwards. The east side has 3.1.2 windows, the south side semi-circular walls having 3 windows to the ground floor, and 1 to the 1st floor (raised in style at a later date); large central modern porch with glazed roof. Some contemporary fireplaces.

UID: 135312

National Grid Reference: SU 73169 07883

Associated records

Hampshire Records Office;

MBR/East Leigh House Heritage Statement:
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