



JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

**FAWLER FARM HOUSE,  
KINGSTON LISLE,  
OXON:**

**An Assessment on Suitability for Listing**

**NGR SU 319 888**

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## **FAWLER FARMHOUSE, KINGSTON LISLE, OXON**

### **An Assessment of Suitability for Listing**

#### **Introduction**

A site visit was made to Fawler farmhouse on 7/5/08 to carry out a survey of the historic fabric and assess the suitability of the house for listing. The structural development of the building is summarised in the following notes and its significance assessed in the light of the listing criteria.

#### **Brief description**

The building has an L-shaped plan and exhibits a complex structural development with an agglomeration of components of different dates and building materials (see fig). The adjacent detached farm buildings are all of 20th century date with the exception of a 19th century brick stable to the south of the house.

**A**     *c.1700* - The core of the house is a symmetrical three bay range consisting of two storeys with attics facing south-east. It is built of chalk rubble with roughcast rendering and has a steeply-pitched tiled roof with dormers and end stacks. A central front door is flanked by three-light windows, all now modern UPVC replacements. Internally there are two rooms divided by a central cross-passage on the ground floor and two bedrooms above; all have axial ceiling beams and one bedroom has a fireplace of 17th century type with an ashlar four-centred arch and bar stops. The roof structure, exposed in the attic, is largely original and comprises four trusses of collar and tie beam type with staggered purlins.

**B**     *Medieval, c.1700, early 19th cent* - The rear wing to the north-west has a more complex development; the half adjoining A is the older and is built of chalk rubble with brick dressings and a timber framed end wall (now internal). This incorporates one blade of a cruck truss from an earlier single-storeyed building phase; it is truncated close to the apex and morticed for a collar. The north-east wall incorporates a large chalk rubble kitchen chimney stack. In the opposite corner there is an enclosed wooden dog-leg stair of early 19th century date which rises to the attic which has a late 18th/early 19th century roof.

**C** *largely 19th cent* - The north-western end of the range also has chalk rubble ground floor walls and is heightened in brick with a straight joint at the junction with B. Internally all the partitions appear to be modern and it is likely that this was formerly a storeyed farm building. The roof is of 19th century queen strut type. All the windows are modern replacements.

**D/E** *late 18th-19th cent* - Along the north-east side of the rear wing there are two phases of single storey lean-to outbuildings; the earlier is largely hidden externally by a modern extension.

**F** *late 19th cent* - At the north-east end of the main range is a late 19th century brick-built extension; it is two-storied with a ground floor bay window and has a separate staircase.

**G** *later 20th cent* - There is a modern brick flat-roofed kitchen extension on the north-west side of E.

**H** *modern* - A large UPVC conservatory projects from the rear wing.

### **Summary of structural development**

The components of the house are of unequal architectural merit and the modern additions (G, H) detract from the building, as do the modern replacement windows. The brick-built late 19th century extension (F) is also of no intrinsic merit and is unsympathetic to the older parts of the house. However the core of the building (A, B) is a substantially complete farmhouse of late 17th or early 18th century date. The front wing (A) appears to be new at this date but the back wing housing the kitchen has been adapted from an older single-storeyed building with a cruck truss roof. Lean-to extensions (D, E) were added and the rear wing extended and heightened (C) in the late 18th or 19th centuries.

### **Listing criteria**

Revised criteria for the selection of listed buildings were issued on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2007, updating Section 6, *Identifying and Recording the Historic Environment*, of PPG 15 (1994) and replacing paragraphs 6.1 – 6.40. Revised paragraph 6.5 states that:

*The statutory criteria for listing are the special architectural or historic interest of a building. Many buildings are interesting architecturally or historically, but, in order to be listed, a building must have “special” interest.*

The general principles employed in the selection of buildings for listing are set out in paragraphs 6.12 – 6.16 and encompass *Age and Rarity* (6.12); *Aesthetic merits* (6.13); *Selectivity* (6.14); *National Interest* (6.15) and *State of Repair* (6.16). This last states that structural condition is not a relevant consideration when deciding whether a building meets the test of special interest.

The most relevant of these criteria to Fawler Farm is *Age and Rarity* which states that:

*The older a building is, and the fewer the surviving examples of its kind, the more likely it is to have special interest. The general principles used are that:*

- *before 1700, all buildings that contain a significant proportion of their original fabric are listed;*
- *from 1700 to 1840, most buildings are listed;*
- *after 1840, because of the greatly increased number of buildings erected and the much larger numbers that have survived, progressively greater selection is necessary*

On these grounds the house would qualify for listing as it is a substantially complete building of c.1700.

Criteria for selection are amplified in English Heritage *Vernacular Houses Selection Guide: Domestic Buildings 1* (March 2007, 3) which draws attention to the significance of the structural development evident at Fawler farm:

*Hardly any vernacular houses have escaped alteration. The evidence of change, important in any building type, has particular value in those that have adapted incrementally over as many as six hundred years. Often these alterations are of outstanding interest in their own right and buildings that illustrate a*

*representative or unusual sequence of development should be regarded as strong candidates for listing.*

The guide also draws attention to the significance of cruck construction:

*All buildings retaining substantial elements of cruck construction are likely to merit listing.*

On both these counts the house would be a candidate for listing.

### **Conclusions**

The house has a complex building history but dates principally to c.1700 with evidence for older antecedents. On these grounds it is likely to be considered suitable for Listing. The stable is not suitable for listing in its own right.

### **References**

English Heritage, Heritage Protection Department, March 2007 *Vernacular Houses Selection Guide, (Domestic Buildings 1)* [www.english-heritage.org.uk/upload/pdf/Domestic\\_1\\_Vernacular.pdf](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/upload/pdf/Domestic_1_Vernacular.pdf)

PPG 15, September 1994 *Planning Policy Guidance 15: Planning and the historic environment*

PPG 15, 8 March 2007 *Revisions to principles of selection for listing buildings*, Communities and Local Government Circular 01/2007

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# Fawler Farmhouse

Block phase plan