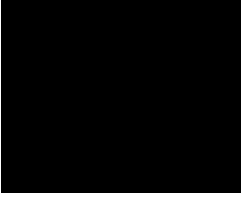


**RECEIVED**

*By Liv Rickman at 3:07 pm, Oct 31, 2023*

Ian Galliers  
EGV Consultancy Ltd



28<sup>th</sup> October 2023

Dear Lisa

**Re Wingletang, The Parade, Hugh Town, Isles of Scilly, Cornwall**

Thank you for making time to meet with Beth Carr and me on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> October at your offices. I trust we explained the Wingletang proposals to you in sufficient detail and cleared up any queries you had.

The primary reason for our visit was to discuss the staircase in response to your email to Chris Carr. You had suggested that the remaining staircase could be original and possibly a local heritage asset worthy of preservation.

We have attached for reference the extracts regarding the stairs from Richard Morris's HIA and follow up statement in response to your queries. Prior to the meeting with you we carefully removed the carpet and underlay covering the staircase to assess the condition and construction of the stairs. This was to determine what had happened over the years during the various alterations and changes the Wingletang had gone through.

On close inspection it was obvious that the staircase had been rebuilt with some original components, notably parts of the outer string and the bottom newel post. The treads and risers have been quite crudely nailed together with modern round head nails to form the stairs on all flights. The landings and smaller flights including the attic flight have also been formed using some retained materials along with newer plywood and particle board.

We have attached a series of photographs to indicate the construction methods and irregularities of the existing stairs as opposed to a traditional staircase construction where the treads and risers would have been housed into the strings, the housings to the newel posts would be positioned on the centre line. The treads would have had a margin below the top edge of the strings. With the current Wingletang stairs the treads protrude past the strings, as shown on the photographs.

Richard Morris mentions that the balustrades have been formed out of modern dowel of possibly broom stails, these are at irregular spacings. It is also evident that the handrails have been cut and jointed to construct the different runs on both flights using salvaged sections from the original staircase.

At our meeting we discussed the position of the original staircase before the addition of the rear modern extensions. The stairwell would have been within its current position but winding up to the first floor taking in the full width of the stairwell corridor. When the additional rear extensions were

added the access through the rear wall was required to link the new and old. The stairs had to be removed, re worked and adapted to provide this access route, through what was the original outer rear wall of the house. There is a photograph below showing this opening through the rear wall into the new extensions. The photographs show the under-stair cupboard and other details mentioned in the HIA.

The current planning application proposed two straight flights one above the other. This design works well and would serve the house safely and remove the danger of the existing adapted and very uneven staircases. This proposal did require more of the ground floor original structure removing to widen the stair well.

We have studied the building layout, as we discussed with you at our meeting. This was to find a more favourable solution that retain the traditional central hall for the full length of the property. In doing this we retaining the current access to the newer rear extensions beyond without and widening the opening. To achieve this, we have designed the lower flight to fit into what was the former housekeepers flat, this would be similar in design to the original staircase replicating and re-modelling the slender sections used in the original construction for the new flights. These in essence would be based on the bottom newel post and the handrail as a pattern for the new flight. The balustrades would be simple rectangular sections 20 x 30 with treads and risers housed into the strings leaving a margin of 30mm above the pitch line.

We have attached the revised drawings for the whole house that improves, particularly the original front first floor rooms back to a more favourable layout, in particular the layout of bedroom no2 with the two sash windows. We plan to reinstate architrave around the central window, which has been removed sometime in the past when the walls were repositioned. This will match the current pattern that is around the two outer windows.

We believe the new staircase site well in the space indicated and retains more of the original stone external walls and also infills the door that has been cut through the wall to give access for the former housekeepers flat. The layout opens the first-floor landing and removes the dangerous steps from front to rear as the existing.

We have to leave the staircase up to the second floor as the current planning application as this works within the existing dormer window and avoids any external alterations and changes that would have been required. The photograph below shows the dormer window up to the second floor giving the head room for the access.

In conclusion we believe the amended staircase design and house layout, along with the various changes to the floor plans improves the property from a health and safety perspective. The amended drawings likewise preserve much more of the existing walls and retain the interior features that still exist. The proposed replication of the delicate joinery details for the new staircase will go a long way to re introducing some of the original lost features within Wingletang.

The proposed work returns the property to a single dwelling, and we believe it will be much more in character with the period of the original granite house than its currently.

**Photographic Evidence.** We will use our current photographs for your files along with preparing a photographic document when the works proceed to record the changes and highlight changes and record any significant works you may request for preserving the history of Wingletang.



**No1.** This picture shows how the treads and risers have been re-fabricated and nailed together using modern round head nails to secured the treads and risers to a softwood sub frame underneath. Note how the treads come past the side strings as opposed to being housed into the string.



**No2.** This picture indicates how the bottom tread comes in front of the newel, traditionally the original riser would be housed into the centre of the newel post. The tread also extends beyond the newel.

## Attached below for reference – Extracts from the HIA

### Wingletang, The Parade, Hugh Town, Isles of Scilly, Cornwall

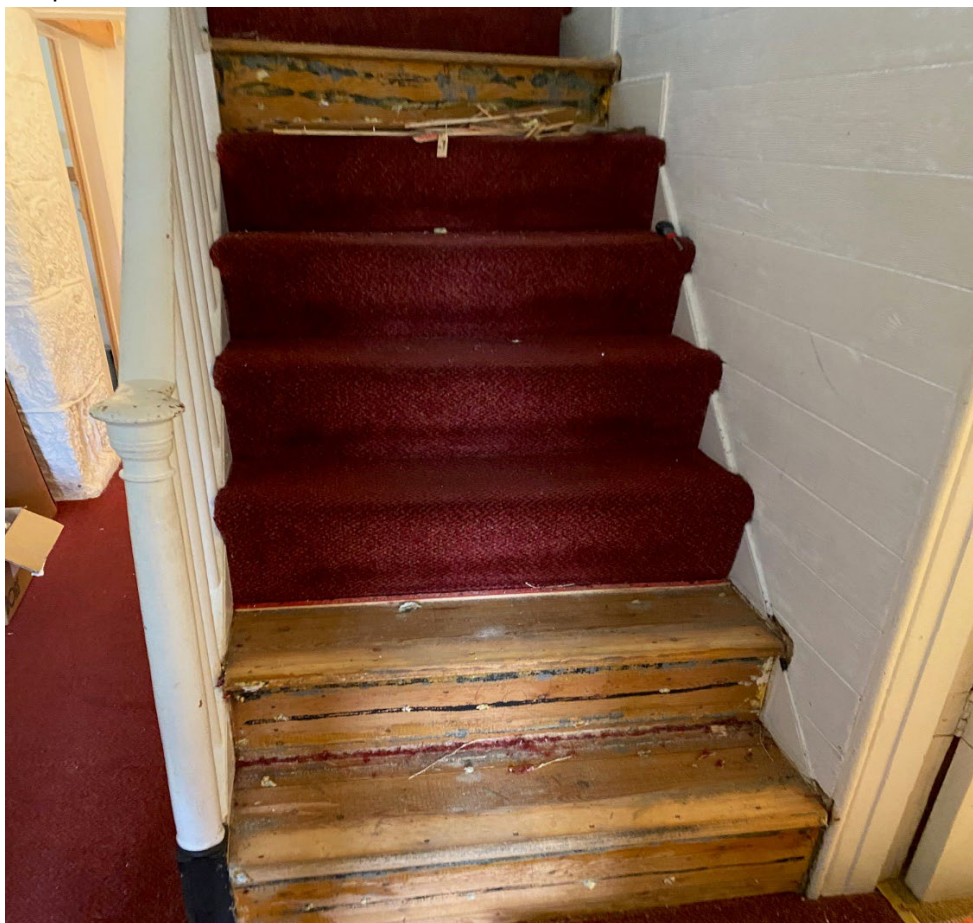
Richard K Morris & Associates, Historic Buildings Consultants, Bromlow House, Bromlow, Shropshire, SY5 0EA

#### 5.1.3.02 The Stairs

The stairs within the Original House are probably in their primary location and the basic carcass of the treads and risers up to the first-floor could be original. However, they have been much altered.

The match-boarding beneath the solid string of the first flight and the infill beneath that flight to the rear are not original – and nor is the odd horizontal match-boarding of the west side of the stair hall or the clumsy skirting on the wall side of the stairs. The basal columnar timber newel could be original, as could parts of the moulded hand-rail – but the balusters clearly are not. These are round and irregularly spaced and are probably quite modern – possibly associated with the necessary changes made to the stairs as a whole once the rear extensions had been raised to a full two storeys in the mid-20th century.

The first flight leads to a quarter landing from which steps of differing risings and goings lead to the first-floor of the Original Range and – through a doorway created out of the original landing window – into the Extensions. All of this work is clearly of the 20th century, including the partial boxing in of the original first-floor landing and the continuation of the stairs up to the present attic level.



**No3** Existing Stairs ground to first floor with part carpet removed to show construction. Note the original newel post and handrail junction on top of the newel.



**No4** This is the entrance to the rear extension looking back into the original house, formed through the rear wall of the stair well to provide access to the new rear extensions. The door to the right is the WC in the new extension. This cut through will remain in the new proposal to minimise further demolition of the original rear granite wall.



**No5** Modern balustrades at irregular spacings.



**No6** Pl.12: The base of the main stairs; note odd balusters and boxing. This indicates the retention and re use of sections of the original handrail.

### 5.1.3.03 The First Floor

The stairs would have led up originally to a first-floor landing, presumably with a short section of balustrade – but all of that was altered when the additional boxed flight of stairs up to the attic floor was created in the mid-20th century. The rest of the original layout of the first floor has been altered and some of the partitions at this level appear to be of plaster-board on stud, indicating significant changes. At present there are two rooms to the front – of different sizes – and two to the rear, flanking the stairs; all have modern en suites formed by plaster-boarded partitions.

The rear rooms are accessed off the landing and are lit by windows in the rear wall looking into light-wells. Neither have any fixtures or features of note but it is evident that both were once heated – as there are projecting chimney breasts from the gable ends. The two modernised front rooms are presently accessed off a small central lobby reached through a doorway off the landing. However, the walls of the lobby, the western section of the spine wall, and the dividing wall between the two front rooms all seem to be of plasterboard on stud.

The eastern front room is slightly larger than the other – being lit by two, instead of three, windows in the façade. Its eastern window has a full-height reveal with primary plainly moulded architrave; the other does not. The window to the western room also has a full-height reveal with architrave. This could imply that there were originally two heated front bedrooms – each lit by the windows with the full architraves – with an unheated closet with plainer window in between them. On 16/10/2023 16:54, Richard Morris wrote:



**No7** This picture shows the foot of the stairs up to the second floor. This will be replaced with a straight flight as the floor plans.





**No8** This is looking down from the second-floor landing. The proposed new staircase will land at the same location and continue down on a single pitch through the quarter landing to the foot as the drawings indicate.

## Richard Morris follow up email

Dear Chris

The building's main significance is in its front elevation and the fact it was built as part of the expansion and improvement to the town in the early-19th century. The interior has been significantly altered and the building significantly extended. The stair has been changed as a result and only a small portion of the original bit survives. Its context as part of a stair has thus been eroded, as has the context of the original layout. I think the compromise solution you are suggested is both sensible and practical and I can certainly support it. It would be very difficult to argue that this remnant of a stair contributes to the significance of the listed building.



**No9** Front Elevation showing the three first floor windows and the second-floor dormers.

**Additional Photographs for reference – no10-no14**



**No10** Tread construction detailing the modern round head nails used



**No11** Newel and handrail detail



**No12** Tread protruding past the string and modern balustrades



**No13** Winder construction, original wall string on the left wall



**No14** Steps to rear extension showing the irregular risers and plywood to the landing.