Welcome

The purpose of this consultation is to give you the opportunity to review, to raise questions and to comment on the proposals, ahead of submission of applications for full planning permission and listed building consent.

The owners of Saling Hall are proposing extensions and alterations to the Grade II* house to create a country house restaurant with rooms.

Proposals include the removal of piecemeal additions to the rear of the house; the re-creation of the east-west cross-wing to the northern elevation; internal and external alterations to the main hall and to the northern annex; alterations to access and associated car parking provision; and re-modelling of the Grade II registered park and garden. The comprehensive set of proposals are presented on the following boards.
Historic Photos

- Saling Hall and Saint James’s Church
- Saling Hall
- Watercolour of Saling Hall
- Saling Hall and garden circa 1970
- Saling Hall and garden
- Saling Hall
- Saint James’s Church
Historic Mapping
Context

Saling Hall lies at the northern end of the village of Great Saling and within the village conservation area. The village sits to the north of the A120 from Braintree to Bishop’s Stortford, and is approximately 6 miles north-west of Braintree.

The site is around 5 ha and is generally level, with a slight slope down to the north-north-west towards the course of Pods Brook. The site is bounded to the north by a minor country road and to the east by the main road that runs through the village.

The south-west is bounded by St James’s Church, Hall Farm Buildings and agricultural land.

Saling Hall is set in the centre of the site screened from both roads by vegetation. The building can only be seen from the Grade II* parish church, St James’s Church which shares access with Saling Hall by the driveway that connects, at the south-east of the site, to the main road through Great Saling.

Existing building

Saling Hall is a timber framed country manor house, faced with red and blue brick under a red plain tiled roof. The main elevation is to the south. The satisfyingly balanced elevation comprises a centre-piece with five bays flanked by two projecting endpieces (2 bays), which rise into the attic storey under moulded shaped Dutch gables. These projections are continuations of the west and east wings, the latter of which has been truncated to around half its original length.

Oddly the elevation has two entrances, placed in bays one and five of the centerpiece. These two half glazed doors are a result of dual occupancy during the 19th Century. However, this feature only adds to the symmetrical composure and to the success of the elevation.

On the west elevation the bays of the first floor are rhythmically set out in pairs with a single window at either end. This was originally true of the ground level also, although bays one and six (read north to south) have been blocked up and are concealed by the 1980’s built conservatory. Hipped dormers that date back to 1680 adorn the west wing.

The north elevation is a now jumble of additions, which mostly occurred between 1875 and 1897, all the surfaces have been rendered and colour-washed, as are the west gable end and the truncated east gable. The severed wing has a 1971 garage attached to it, rendered to match the courtyard one side, and blocks faced with brick on the other.
**SALING HALL TIMELINE**

- **1590**: Maxey family built the timber framed core of the present hall.
- **1665**: Martin Carter bought Saling Hall for £3,980.
- **1680**: Carter re-cased the house in red brick, eliminating almost all timber frame.
- **1699**: Carter made ‘great alterations’ to Saling Hall which included: Dutch gables were added to lengthened gable ends at the south. The entire south elevation added to the house. The entrance was relocated from the north to a central position on the south facade. Bay six in west elevation blocked when the oak staircase, with intricate elm balustrades, was added. Dormers added to south elevation.
- **c1780**: First addition filling the courtyard.
- **1796**: Bartlett Goodrich bought both of the major houses of Great Saling, Saling Hall and Saling Parks (Today Saling Grove).
- **1838**: Two of Goodrich’s daughters, both married to sea captains, co-inhabited Saling Hall.
- **c1840**: Two entrance doors added as result of dual occupancy.
- **c1860**: New gable end and a central chimney stack added to the remainder of the east wing.
- **c1870**: Hipped dormers removed from south elevation.
- **1875-97**: Most of the additions against the north elevation.
- **1936**: Lady Carlyle moved into Saling Hall.
- **1943**: United States Air Force occupied the east of the house and the park to the north.
- **1971**: Hugh Johnson OBE bought Saling Hall.
- **1973**: Garage added to truncated east wing.
- **1980**: Conservatory added to west elevation.

For a detailed appraisal see Bill Wilson’s historic report:

View from the north west:

**Historic Mapping**
Existing and Proposed Elevations

1. Proposed east wing
2. Proposed north cross
tilting
gall

3. Proposed roof flech
to
existing
gale.

4. Proposed hipped
dormers to
existing
dormers on
east elevation.

5. Proposed windows
	for
tilting
gall.

6. Proposed back
dormers.

7. Stringcoursed
plinth

corner.

8. Proposed
east wing
gate
	for
	brick
	front.

9. Proposed
east wing
corner
damages.

10. Flat
tilting
galle.

11. Sliding
gate
damages.

12. Windows
renovated.
Public Consultation - Saling Hall

Proposals - Floor Plans

Existing

Proposed

Existing

Proposed

Existing

Proposed

Existing

Proposed

Existing

Proposed

Proposals - Floor Plans

Do not scale off dimensions. Check all dimensions on site and report any apparent discrepancy immediately.

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1. Lobby
2. Bar Cellar
3. Store
4. Entrance Hall
5. Reception
6. Private Dining
7. Courtyard Bar
8. WCs
9. Residents Lounge
10. Stair Hall
11. WCs
12. Lobby
13. Male WCs
14. Female WCs
15. Dining
16. Dining

KEY
Proposals - Floor Plans

Existing

Proposed

Existing

Proposed

Existing

Proposed

Existing

Proposed
Design Strategy

The proposed extensions and refurbishment, as shown at the public exhibition in July 2013, were originally conceived for a family house. The family now live in Abbotts Hall and the initial designs have since been adapted to create a restaurant with rooms which will be run and managed as an enterprise by the owners. The result is a reversible change of use. The proposed alterations to Saling Hall will restore it to its splendor as a manor house that was built for the enjoyment of many people including the entertainment of family, friends and guests. Turning the hall into a restaurant with rooms will enable it to continue serving this purpose, while maintaining the historic features that shape the building.

The architectural strategy is to re-establish the clarity of form of the original building and provide accommodation suitable to extend the life of the building. The former is achieved by re-establishing the missing east wing and removing 20th century low quality infills. The latter will be achieved by a new north cross wing enclosing a central internal courtyard and minor alterations and demolitions that further enhance the historic qualities of the existing building.

Although there is no evidence that shows Saling Hall ever had a north cross wing, the 1838 Tithe Map indicates that at some point this space was built on. For this reason the new cross wing has been designed as visually detached from the H-plan house, in a contemporary manner but sympathetic in form and materials.
The gardens at Saling Hall

At 12 acres, the gardens at Saling Hall are relatively small compared to English country houses of the time. The present form of the gardens took shape over the last eighty years at the hands of last two owners: Lady Carlyle from 1936-1970, who gave Saling Hall its first modern gardens, and Hugh and Judy Johnson 1970-2013.

- The park contains a good collection of interesting trees including some notable and unusual specimens. Over the years the space for the proper development and appreciation of these specimens has become cramped, as neighbouring trees have expanded. A careful editing and selection of the best and most valuable specimens and removal of less good competing trees is essential to restore and enhance the grounds in a manner befitting to the setting of the main hall. Some of this work has been undertaken but further work will sustain the long-term value of the collection and its amenity and quality.

- A new pedestrian and vehicular entrance into the southern part of the site from Bardfield Road is proposed from the existing access serving Saling Hall Farm. Approximately 20 parking spaces would be created between the existing trees with further screen planting, to serve St James’s Church.

- The existing main access from Bardfield Road is proposed for improvements to the visibility splays and would serve as an exit. There is already approval from the Braintree District Council to remove the existing close boarded boundary fence and replace with metal estate railings, reduce the size of the pond to provide a bigger roadside margin of landscaping and further open up views towards the church. This is in response to public and Parish Council comments made at the last consultation in 2013.

- The main restaurant and guest parking is proposed to be created within an existing enclosed area, currently used for storage of farm machinery, to the north of a large modern barn associated with Hall Farm. This would be accessed via the existing chase from Stebbing Road. Further landscaping would reinstate and enhance the peripheral hedgerows to provide further screening from long distance views and footpaths.

- The structure of the garden: its circulation, principal vistas and spaces, have lost definition in some areas due to ‘volunteer’ growth and a programme of pruning and, where necessary, removal is being implemented. For example: the recent removal of the aged Lombardy Poplars on the south front has restored the balance of the view of this elevation, brought the Church back as an integral part of the setting, and restored the lightness of the main garden front of the house. Removal of vehicles from the garden will benefit this sunny garden space.

- The more geometric garden ‘rooms’ closer to the house are re-worked to strengthen their relationship with the house. This pattern is at once traditional and modern - part of an actively evolving design language. It is a form typical of a seventeenth century country house, modernised at Sissinghurst and Hidcote, and more recently in the work of a number of designers including John Brookes.
Summary of proposals and benefits

• To provide a high quality venue - a country house restaurant with rooms - within a valued historic and landscape setting would be an asset to the District.

• This will boost tourism and the local economy, create jobs, attract visitors to the area, enable public access to the site, provide off street parking for visitors to the church and open up the historic view of Saling Hall from The Street.

• With 8 rooms and up to 60 covers (including private dining rooms), the proposals will create approximately 28-30 new jobs, including a head chef, together with indirect jobs and local income from other suppliers, local producers and support services.

• The 1970’s Garage will be removed to make way for the reinstated east wing. The 19th Century lean-to additions will also be cleared so that the area enclosed by the proposed east and north wings can be utilised.

• Rebuilding the east wing to how it was in 1699. The current truncated wing will be extended to match the west and complete the H-plan. The re-established east wing will be built of brick and lime mortar to match the remaining portion, with fenestration and details sympathetic to the historic building.

• To provide a new 2 storey cross wing to the north elevation. This has been designed as visually detached from the H-plan house, in a contemporary manner but sympathetic in form and material. The construction and detailing proposed for the north wing further emphasises its contemporary nature, distinguishing it from existing fabric: a glazed gap visually separates it from the main body of the house and the cladding is corten, a contemporary finish but one that is sympathetic in tone and colour to the finishes of the existing building.

• To redesign the landscape to enhance prominence to the south wing by removing cars and restoring the south garden.

• New outbuildings to house management equipment.

• With the removal of the lean-to additions, the staircase to the attic must also be removed. Access to the attic storage area will be reinstated to the second floor via stairs in the proposed east wing. Wherever possible the partition walls will be removed to re-establish the original rooms.

• To restore, define and enhance the important features forming the structure of the garden, including its circulation and principal vistas through a programme of pruning and where necessary, removal.

• To rework the more geometric garden ‘rooms’ closer to the house to strengthen their relationship with the house. This is a form typical of a seventeenth century country house, as demonstrated by the modernised gardens at Sissinghurst and Hidcote.

Overall the proposals mark an exciting new chapter in the continuing evolution of Saling Hall and its gardens.

All the works would be undertaken within the context of the comprehensive master plan which establishes a framework for the overall detailed proposals for both the house, the outbuildings and the grounds.

Note regarding access to St James’s Church

We propose that as part of a successful application we will put in place a permissive right of vehicular and pedestrian access and car parking to serve the church on land forming part of Saling Hall as shown on the landscape masterplan.

This permissive access will be documented and provided by the owners of Saling Hall as a gesture of goodwill, as there is currently no legal right of access. There is an existing public footpath from The Street via Hall Farm Green.
Thank you for attending this consultation. If you would like to share your views or make further comments on the proposals please fill out a comments form provided and hand it to a member of the project team.

Alternatively, if you would like to take a comments form away with you, please ensure that it reaches us by post by Wednesday 24th September at the following address:

Andrew Martin – Planning, Town Mill, Mill Lane, Stebbing, Dunmow, Essex, CM6 3SN.

You can also send your comments by email to:

office@am-plan.com

The consultation material is available to view on our website:

www.am-plan.com/saling-hall-2014/