

CHERWELL DISTRICT COUNCIL

Pre-Application Report

Pre-application Reference No:	18/00296/PREAPP
Proposal:	Internal alterations and reconfiguration and glazed link to existing outbuildings
Site Address:	Cedar Lodge, North Side, Steeple Aston, OX25 4SE
Date Site Visited:	14 December 2018
Meeting:	On site – 14 December 2018 at 10am

TECHNICAL ASSESSMENT

Internal Consultations Required:

Cherwell District Council Building Control – confirm that a Building Regulations application will be required, although no further comments to make at this stage.

Cherwell District Council Conservation Officer –

Understanding the heritage assets affected

Cedar Lodge is a mid-18th Century house of substantial size which is listed grade II. It lies within the Steeple Aston Conservation Area.

Significance

The listed building description is for identification purposes only (as was usual at the date of listing in 1988) and does not give an indication of significance.

The building is of mid-18th Century date with some later extensions and alterations.

A recent heritage report on the site provided a basic description of the building *‘The north (front elevation to the house) whilst imposing is relatively plain, in comparison to what appears to be a more refined and architectural south (garden elevation). The main range is ‘double pile’ with a central valley and gable ends, the west service range is single span, hipped and with a slate roof.’*

A Heritage Appraisal is required to identify the core elements of significance to the individual elements of the property.

Proposals

There are a number of proposals to reconfigure the building in relation to the requirements of the new owners including

- Glazed link to garden studio
- Reconfiguration of conservatory
- Removal of wall in service area to form utility room / boot room

- Removal of existing service stair and creation of new stair.
- Creation of cloakroom and downstairs WC
- Creation of new en-suite to master bedroom by breaching through wall
- Reconfiguration of partitions in service wing to create two bedrooms
- New stairs up to attic level

Appraisal of issues (including relevant planning history)

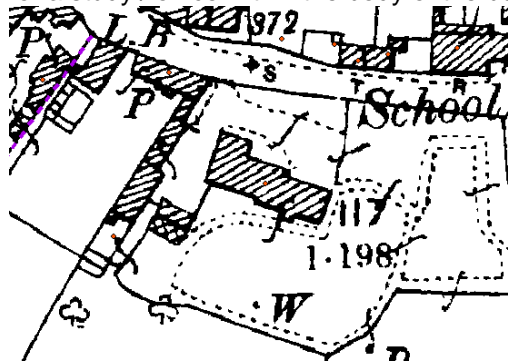
The following comments are an interim assessment prior to a heritage assessment of the building.

Glazed link to garden studio

The proposal is to create a glazed corridor leading from the principal house to the garden studio to the rear of the boundary wall.

There are concerns with the principle of this. The wall clearly forms a boundary to the gardens surrounding Cedar Lodge and separates it from the yard to the west. A link in this location would involve breaching through the wall, losing a sash window (although it was claimed on site that this was a modern addition), remove the understanding of the functional separation of different elements of the site and would have a detrimental impact on the setting of the principal building of Cedar Lodge and its associated outbuildings in the yard.

There are no objections to converting the garden store to a studio / office, but there is no reason this couldn't be a standalone structure. Alternatively there are other potential locations for a study / office within the body of the building.



1900 map of the site showing

Proposed alterations to conservatory

The proposal is make some alterations to the existing conservatory and to widen an opening (which would involve the loss of an original sash window) to create a through space for kitchen and dining room.

The existing conservatory was granted consent in 2000 (00/00932/LB and 00/00930/F) and therefore is not of intrinsic historic merit. There would be no objections to altering the existing fabric.

There would, however, be additional harm caused to the historic fabric by the loss of the sash window. This should be avoided and alternatives considered for the plan and layout of the property. The historic photograph below shows the south façade of the building with the service wing with sash windows throughout.



Removal of wall in service area to form utility room / boot room

The function and significance of this area of the building are currently unknown. It is likely that the proposed alteration will be acceptable, but further information is required following the Heritage Statement.

Removal of existing service stair and creation of new stair.

The existing stair is not considered to be of historic merit and there is no objection to its removal and replacement. A justification would need to be given for the proposed new location and to ensure it does not impact on historically significant circulation space.

Creation of cloakroom and downstairs WC

There would be no objections in principle to this alteration. Full details of plumbing and drainage would be required.

Creation of new en suite to master bedroom by breaching through wall

There are concerns with the breaching through the wall between the principal house and the service wing. This will interfere with the proportions of one of the principal rooms in the property. There is level change between the two elements of the property

Reconfiguration of partitions in service wing to create two bedrooms

There are no objections to this alteration. The existing configuration is a modern intervention and there would be no additional harm to the building through an amended layout.

New stairs up to attic level

Further details are required, but the area would appear to have been the original location for the stairs at ground to first floor level. The current stair is not of historic merit and there would be no objections to its removal. It is understood that the applicants want to use the attic area for storage / ancillary use only. There may be issues with building control if there were a requirement for full accommodation in this area.

Level of harm

Less than Substantial

Recommendation

Further details required in the form of a heritage statement. Mixed response to proposals as detailed above.

Cherwell District Council Ecology – no comments received at time of writing, these will be forwarded once received.

External Consultations Required: None.

Flood Risk: The site is not in a flood plain.

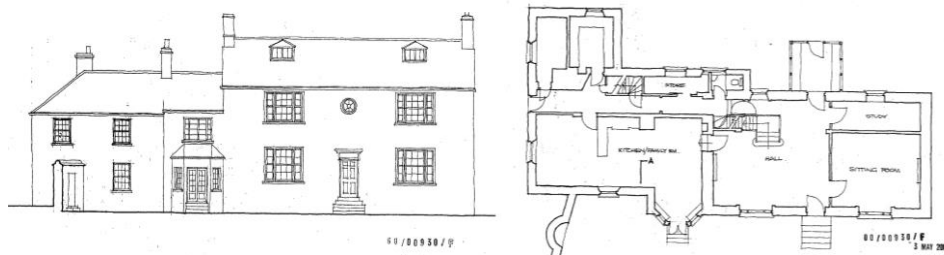
Committee or Delegated Matter? The proposal is likely to be considered under delegated powers unless it is called to Planning Committee by an elected Councillor.

Relevant Planning History:

94/00020/NLB – Internal and external alterations to house – approved 22 June 1994. The proposed plans include the ground floor window beyond the wall.



00/00930/F & 00/00932/LB – Demolition of existing bay window/door to allow erection of oak framed conservatory at rear – approved on 05 July 2000 subject to conditions requiring the submission of detailed drawings of the external joinery at a scale of not less than 1:20 prior to the commencement of the development. I can find no record of these conditions having been discharged and the conservatory is therefore considered unauthorised. As this is a listed building, unauthorised works do not ever become exempt from enforcement action and as such the works should be regularised.



I can find no planning history relating to the former stable buildings to the west of the site and as a result, their authorised use as an independent dwelling/s is queried.

Policy:

Development Plan Policies

The Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 - Part 1 was formally adopted by Cherwell District Council on 20th July 2015 and provides the strategic planning policy framework for the District to 2031. The Local Plan 2011-2031 – Part 1 replaced a number of the 'saved' policies of the adopted Cherwell Local Plan 1996 though many of its policies are retained and remain part of the development plan. The relevant planning policies of Cherwell District's statutory Development Plan are set out below:

Cherwell Local Plan 2011 - 2031 Part 1

ESD10 - Protection and Enhancement of Biodiversity and the Natural Environment

ESD15 - The Character of the Built and Historic Environment

Cherwell Local Plan 1996 (saved Policies)

C18 - Development proposals affecting a listed building

C28 - Layout, design and external appearance of new development

C30 - Design Control

Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Development Plan (Draft)

PD5 – Buildings and site design

Other Material Planning Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

You should be aware of the following matters/issues/designations:

- The building is Grade II listed
- The site forms a part of the setting of Grade II listed Cedar Cottage, and curtilage listed stable buildings to the west
- The site is of medium archaeological interest
- The site may contain naturally elevated levels of Arsenic
- The site is within the Steeple Aston Conservation Area
- A number of protected and notable species have been identified in the area, including the swift and Common Pipistrelle bat
- A public right of way runs to the west of the site, beyond the curtilage associated with Cedar Cottage

COMMENTS FROM CASE OFFICER

As requested on 07 January 2019 a full written response has not been provided at this stage. I have however, identified the key issues and policies that a subsequent application stands to be considered against, that you may find of assistance when drawing up your proposals.

I consider the key issues to be as follows:

- Visual impact, including the impact upon the historic significance of the designated Conservation Area, the Grade II listed building and the setting of nearby Grade II listed buildings
- Residential amenity and privacy
- Protected species

Policy background:

Visual impact, including the impact upon the historic significance of the designated Conservation Area, the Grade II listed building and the setting of nearby Grade II listed buildings

Government guidance contained within the NPPF requires development to function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development. Development should be visually attractive, sympathetic to local character and history, and establish or maintain a strong sense of place. Permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions.

Policy ESD15 of The Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 Part 1 requires development to complement and enhance the character of its context through sensitive siting, layout and high quality design. All new development will be required to meet high design standards. Further, development proposals will be required to conserve, sustain and enhance designated and non-designated heritage assets including buildings, features, archaeology, conservation areas and their settings. Proposals for development that affect non-designated heritage assets will be considered taking account of the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

Saved Policies C28 and C30 of the Cherwell Local Plan 1996 seek a standard of layout, design and external appearance, including the choice of external finish materials, that are sympathetic to the character of the context of the development.

In sensitive areas, such as Conservation Areas, development will be required to be of a high standard and the use of traditional local building materials will normally be required.

Policy PD5 of the Mid-Cherwell Local Plan (draft) states that new development should be designed to a high standard which responds to the distinctive character of the settlement and reflects the guidelines and principles set out within the Heritage and Character Assessment. Further, proposals should wherever possible include appropriate landscape mitigation measures to reduce the impact of the built form and ensure that development is in keeping with the existing rural character of the village and development affecting existing traditional stone walls should identify them on proposals drawings, and wherever possible retain and/or repair them using traditional techniques and materials.

Residential amenity and privacy

Government guidance contained within the NPPF requires development to create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible, promoting health and well-being, and with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users. Policy ESD 15 of the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 requires all development to consider the amenity of both existing and future development. Saved Policy C30 of the Cherwell Local Plan 1996 seeks standards of amenity and privacy acceptable to the Local Planning Authority.

Protected species

Government guidance contained within the NPPF requires the protection and enhancement of biodiversity. If significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused.

Policy ESD10 echoes Government guidance, requiring relevant habitat and species surveys to accompany applications which may affect a site, habitat or species of known or potential ecological value, seeking net gains in biodiversity, the protection of existing trees and the protection, management, enhancement and extension of existing resources along with the creation of new ones.

I understand that you would like to submit a follow-up request for pre-application advice, after which a full written response will be provided. The fee would be £96.

Date of Report: 09 January 2019

Case Officer: Gemma Magnuson

DISCLAIMER

The above advice represents the professional views of Council Officers and although given in good faith, it cannot prejudice any decision with the Council, as Local Planning Authority, may make at either Planning Committee or delegated officer level.