

**Cedar Lodge
North Side
Steeple Aston
Bicester
OX25 4SE**

19/00703/LB

Case Officer: Gemma Magnuson **Recommendation:** Refuse

Applicant: Mr & Mrs A Pasteur

Proposal: Creation of a jib door between bedroom and bathroom to create an en-suite with associated works

Expiry Date: 25 June 2019

1. APPLICATION SITE AND SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCE

1.1. Cedar Lodge is detached, Grade II listed dwelling situated central to the north of the village of Steeple Aston, in the designated conservation area. Other Grade II listed buildings are situated to the north and west of the site.

1.2. The Conservation Officer has provided the following summary of significance of the building:

1.3. *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. The heritage report for the site provides 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.'*

1.4. *The heritage report suggests there are a range of elements of significance including:*

- *Physical evidence of a building that has evolved from its early 18th century origins and provides understanding of its development and the gentrification of the village from the 19th century.*
- *It exhibits evidence of several phases of change, reflecting the needs and aspirations of new occupiers and shows how the demands of contemporary society are reflected in the building's fabric and setting.*
- *Its history as a large detached house and its ownership by wealthy landowners contributes to understanding of the social and economic structure of the village and the impact of the wealthy middle and upper classes.*
- *The 'chapters' in the building's history have resulted in a change to the house, adding interest but sometimes losing part of the history and earlier evidence. Changes to the building's setting also contribute to its historical interest with evidence of the amalgamation of the closes to create the extensive garden setting.*

- 1.5. *The Heritage Report also provides a conjectural summary of the changing role of the service wing. The report indicates that the loft area would not have been used as accommodation with servants instead being housed in the service wing of the building. The report also states that guests and members of the family would also have used this same area. 'Census information indicates that there are usually about 3 or 4 family members and 3 or 4 servants at any one time. Two of the servants (the Groom and the Gardener) very possibly lived in ancillary accommodation to the house, leaving just two servants occupying the service range. This means that there were likely only 2 or 3 servants needing accommodation in the service range and 3 or 4 members of the family plus guests needing 'main' accommodation. As there are only 2 principal bedrooms for the heads of the household and their guests, at least one more 'main' room is required for the children'*

2. DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 2.1. This application seeks consent to create a jib door at first floor level to connect one of the principal bedrooms in the main house into a small room within the service wing to create an en-suite and dressing room.

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1. There is no planning history directly relevant to the proposal.

4. PRE-APPLICATION DISCUSSIONS

- 4.1. The following pre-application discussions have taken place with regard to this proposal:

<u>Application Ref.</u>	<u>Proposal</u>
19/00012/PREAPP	Internal alterations and reconfiguration and glazed link to existing buildings

- 4.2. The applicant was advised that the creation of a jib door between the bedroom and bathroom was unlikely to be supported at application stage.

5. RESPONSE TO PUBLICITY

- 5.1. This application has been publicised by way of a site notice displayed near the site and by advertisement in the local newspaper. The final date for comments was 06.06.2019, although comments received after this date and before finalising this report have also been taken into account. No comments have been raised by third parties.

6. RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION

- 6.1. Below is a summary of the consultation responses received at the time of writing this report. Responses are available to view in full on the Council's website, via the online Planning Register.

PARISH/TOWN COUNCIL AND NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUMS

- 6.2. Steeple Aston Parish Council – no objection and therefore support application.

OTHER CONSULTEES

6.3. CDC Conservation – objection, and comment as follows:

Breaching through two separate areas of the building

- 6.4. The core concern with the proposed application is the loss of functional separation between the 'principal' and 'service' areas of the building, which were constructed at different times and are on different levels. It also involves the loss of historic fabric associated with the original building.
- 6.5. Cedar Lodge is understood to have its origin as a farmhouse '*Cedar Lodge was the home of the Lamley family, wealthy farmers in Steeple Aston who also owned property elsewhere in the county*'. Part of the history of the building is the evolution of the building from farmhouse to a larger country residence '*In the 18th century, the Lamleys styled themselves gentlemen, redeveloping existing pre-enclosure plots to construct a house befitting their status*' and '*Post enclosure it seems clear that several plots were amalgamated and the existing buildings replaced to create a larger country residence*'
- 6.6. The recent report states '*Cedar Lodge is a smaller country house and it is evident that the service wing was absorbed as a part of the main living of the house, with no staff in service. To argue that the use of the adjoining room in the service range to the main bedroom would undermine understanding of the historic function of the service range would ignore the 20th century history of the country house and that in particular of Cedar Lodge, which shows that the service range is now part of the main living spaces with opening made through at ground floor level and first floor circulation altered.*'. It is appreciated that the house has been through a long ongoing period of evolution, but it is now a listed building and there is a duty for the local authority to consider whether works to the listed building retain the special architectural or historic interest which the building possesses.
- 6.7. The historic evolution of the building from farmhouse to country house is considered to form part of the core significance (or special interest) of the building, It is considered that the proposed development which would breach through between the original farmhouse and into the later service wing, which was added during its transition to a small country house residence would undermine part of this core significance and lead to a loss of evidence about the development of the property over time.
- 6.8. The original Heritage Report on the property as a whole acknowledges that '*The 'chapters' in the building's history have resulted in a change to the house, adding, but sometimes losing part of the history and earlier evidence*'. It is considered that this particular element of the proposed developments would lose part of the history and evidence from a significant period in the building's evolution.
- 6.9. It is appreciated that buildings need to change and adapt to suit new circumstances, but it is considered that no convincing evidence has been put forward about the requirement for this alteration, particularly given the fact that there is already a large bedroom with an existing en-suite which could function as the master bedroom. The Heritage Report states '*Introducing a private bathroom to this bedroom reflects the status of Cedar Lodge and is a necessary part of 21st century living. It would be a requirement of any new owner.*', but there is not a public benefit to this proposal. The property is capable of functioning as a single domestic residence without this proposed alteration.

6.10. Provision of jib door

6.11. There are no objections in principle to the use of a jib door and the use of jib doors in different historic contexts has been well documented within the report. It is also acknowledged that *'The use of a jib door would preserve the architectural proportions and detailing of the room.'* If the application were considered to be acceptable in principle it would be a sensible solution to the issue.

6.12. CDC Building Control – no comment to make.

7. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

7.1. Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

7.2. 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 (CLP 2031 Part 1)

- ESD15 - The Character of the Built and Historic Environment

CHERWELL LOCAL PLAN 1996 SAVED POLICIES (CLP 1996)

- C18 – Development proposals affecting a listed building

MID-CHERWELL NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

- PD5: Building and Site Design

7.3. Other Material Planning Considerations

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)
- Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment: Historic England Good Practice (2015)
- The Setting of Heritage Assets: Historic England Good Practice (2015)

8. APPRAISAL

8.1. The key issue for consideration in this case is the impact on the historic significance and setting of the listed building(s).

8.2. Section 16(2) of The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) states that: *In considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works the local planning authority or the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.* Further, under Section 72(1) of the same Act the Local Planning Authority has a statutory duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area.

- 8.3. Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas are designated heritage assets, and Paragraph 190 of the NPPF states that: *Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise.*
- 8.4. Paragraph 193 of the NPPF directs that: *when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.* Policy ESD15 of the CLP 2031 Part 1 echoes this guidance. Saved Policy C18 of the CLP 1996 seeks minor and sympathetic alterations to listed buildings.
- 8.5. The existing dwelling consists of two distinct elements of accommodation; the principal dwelling with pitched roof and largely symmetrical appearance, and a service range extending from the western elevation of the principal dwelling that is lower in height with a hipped roof. The service range is currently connected to the principal element of the dwelling via the hallway at ground floor level and landing at first floor level. It is considered that this is likely to be the original location of the connection between the two elements.
- 8.6. The function of the service wing in such dwellings were to provide accommodation for servants required by the household, that enabled access to the main house using different routes to their employer, aiming to be seen as little as possible. There is normally a clear division between the principal dwelling and service accommodation.
- 8.7. As the Conservation Officer has advised, the historic evolution of the building from farmhouse to country house is considered to form part of the core significance (or special interest) of the building.
- 8.8. The proposed development would involve the installation of a direct connection between the principal bedroom and the probable former servant bedroom in the service wing to create an en-suite and dressing room.
- 8.9. It is considered that the proposed development which would breach through between the original farmhouse and into the later service wing, which was added during its transition to a small country house residence, would undermine part of this core significance of the listed building, and lead to a loss of evidence about the development of the property over time. It is for this reason that I consider that the development would result in less than substantial harm to the historic significance of the listed building.
- 8.10. The Heritage Impact Statement states that the proposals recognise the heritage significance of Cedar Lodge, and balances it with the reasonable expectations of the new owners (the applicant) to live in a house suitable for 21st Century living.
- 8.11. Government guidance contained within the NPPF, and echoed by Policy ESD 15 of the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 Part 1, states that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, the harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use, where appropriate.
- 8.12. I do not interpret this as a requirement to weigh the less than substantial harm that would be caused with the expectations and desires of the current owner of Cedar

Lodge. In any case, given that the dwelling already benefits from a first floor en-suite bedroom within the principal element of the dwelling, I consider this argument to be weakened.

8.13. Further, I consider that the dwelling is capable of functioning as a family dwelling in its current configuration, and I do not therefore consider that case could be made for this work to be a requirement in order to secure a viable use for the dwelling, that would outweigh the less than substantial harm to the historic significance of the listed building that has been identified.

8.14. The proposed development is therefore contrary to Government guidance contained within the NPPF, Policy ESD15 of the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 Part 1 and saved Policy C18 of the Cherwell Local Plan 1996.

9. RECOMMENDATION

That consent is refused, for the following reason(s):

That the proposed breach through between the original farmhouse and the later service wing would result in less than substantial harm to the significance of this designated heritage asset through the erosion of the distinction between the principal and service accommodation. In the absence of identified public benefit to outweigh the less than substantial harm, the proposal is contrary to Policy ESD15 of the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 Part 1 and saved Policy C18 of the Cherwell Local Plan 1996 and Government guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework.

Case Officer: Gemma Magnuson

DATE: 25 June 2019

Checked By: Paul Ihringer

DATE: 25/6/19