

Rachel Tibbetts

From: Andrew Thompson
Sent: 15 September 2023 11:26
To: DC Support
Subject: FW: Stratfield Farm, 374 Oxford Road, Kidlington, Oxfordshire, OX5 1DL - 22/01757/LB

Please upload

From: Anya Lucas <Anya@georgiangroup.org.uk>
Sent: Friday, August 18, 2023 12:56 PM
To: Andrew Thompson <Andrew.Thompson@Cherwell-DC.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: Stratfield Farm, 374 Oxford Road, Kidlington, Oxfordshire, OX5 1DL - 22/01757/LB

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Dear Andrew,

Many thanks for your detailed response. In light of the new information provided, we are satisfied that the balancing exercise set out in paragraph 202 of the NPPF has been carried out and we have no further comments.

Best wishes,
Anya

Dr Anya Lucas
Conservation Adviser (South West of England)
The Georgian Group
6 Fitzroy Square
London W1T 5DX
020 7529 8927

Call for new entries – nominate Georgian Heritage at Risk: We are now gathering entries for the 2023 edition of our Heritage at Risk register. If you would like to nominate any at risk building, structure, or landscape dating from 1700-1837 (either designated or undesignated) please send details to: atrisk@georgiangroup.org.uk (deadline: 8 September). Read more here: <https://georgiangroup.org.uk/2023/01/17/heritage-at-risk-2>

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From: Andrew Thompson <Andrew.Thompson@Cherwell-DC.gov.uk>
Sent: Thursday, August 17, 2023 2:27 PM
To: Anya Lucas <Anya@georgiangroup.org.uk>
Subject: RE: Stratfield Farm, 374 Oxford Road, Kidlington, Oxfordshire, OX5 1DL - 22/01757/LB

Anya,

Thank you for your comments in response to the application. I have liaised with the Council's Conservation Officer as the application has been the subject of negotiation and pre-application discussion during the time of the application. I attach the site photos from the Council's visit as part of the Council's risk register work.

The Council's Conservation Officer took photographs when the building was visited as part of the Council's work to identify the local heritage at risk register (Grade II), as part of this work a Conservation Accredited Structural Engineer was requested to prepare a condition report and he advised that no-one should enter the building.



Photograph shows the wall where the opening is proposed. We have not checked the skirting to the principal room for evidence of piecing in.



Photograph shows a possible blocked opening but it may have just been a shallow cupboard or niche for shelving – there is ghyssing for bracketed shelves. This is not shown on the survey plan.

A Statement of Significance was commissioned before the no-entry advice:



Plate 31: G7, looking south, with blocked doorway into G3

Their Statement of significance noted:

“The door opening into the kitchen (G7) from here appears rather crudely formed through the stonemasonry; this may simply be because this is at the service end of the house or may be that the opening was made through the wall after it had been built rather than contemporary with the original construction – if the outshut is a later addition, it may have been formed when that was constructed (there is evidence in G7 of a former connecting door opening between G7 and G3 providing access between the front and rear wings otherwise).”



This is the 'crudely formed' door opening

Heritage Impact Assessment for 22/01757/LB:

“the formation of an opening in the wall between the kitchen (G7) and the proposed dining room (G3)”

2.2.5 Internally, on the ground floor, there are two proposed alterations. First, it is proposed to form an opening in the wall between the western front reception room (G3; which would become a dining room) and the kitchen (G7). The opening will have pocket doors closed against the G3 side of the wall.

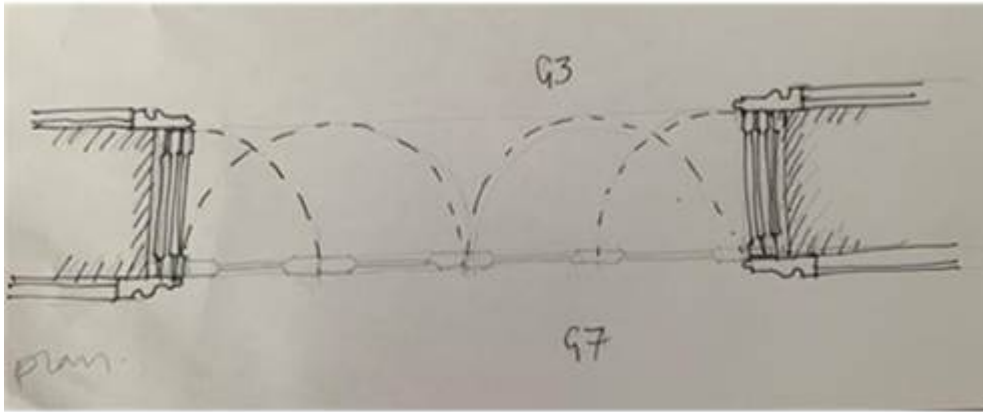
2.2.6 On the G7 side of the wall, there is an existing recess of door-like proportions and some other disturbance in the wall noted on this side, of unknown origin. While this suggests there was formerly communication between the two rooms, subsequently blocked, it is now intended to form a new opening centrally to the wall. This will necessitate some minor loss of fabric, noting that this spine wall is first in need of significant repair as part of the resolution of the building's structural issues (at first floor level there is significant cracking in the outer edge of the wall where it meets the western external wall, extending down into the ground floor).

2.2.7 In my view, this proposal will not affect the significance and 'special interest' of the building; it is not uncommon for such openings to be formed in this location in houses having this type of plan form (both historically and as part of more recent interventions to improve circulation). The impact arises primarily from the loss of fabric that will be required but this will be relatively minor and can be balanced against the obvious and substantial

benefits to the building of the significant repair work initially required and the reinstatement of the use of the building."

Response:

Whilst Conservation Officers raised concerns initially with this controversial change, the Heritage Consultant argued for this change against the benefit of repairing the building and getting it back into use. As a compromise they look to retain the sense of enclosure and room proportion by adding shutter style doors within architraves to tuck into the recess when open; these would close towards the proposed dining room. An alternative proposal was to install propose pocket doors but this proposal was considered less desirable as the works may need more fabric to be removed if they are to avoid a pelmet on the dining room side. A normal door may be less harmful using the existing recess as a jib door. We do not have details.



"Many listed buildings can sustain some degree of sensitive alteration or extension to accommodate continuing or new uses. Indeed, cumulative changes reflecting the history of use and ownership are themselves an aspect of the special interest of some buildings, and the merit of some new alterations or additions, especially where they are generated within a secure and committed long-term ownership, should not be discounted." **Superseded PPG15 1996** was followed by "Change in the historic environment is inevitable, caused by natural processes, the wear and tear of use, and people's responses to social, economic and technological change" **Conservation Principles: Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment Historic England (2008)**

The effect of cumulative change can be harmful, if each application erodes a little of what is special about the listed building. Assessing whether a proposed change is acceptable needs an understanding of the significance of the building element and its part in the listed building as a whole, alongside a robust justification for the need.

"28. The cumulative impact of incremental small-scale changes may have as great an effect on the significance of a heritage asset as a larger scale change. Where the significance of a heritage asset has been compromised in the past by unsympathetic development to the asset itself or its setting, consideration still needs to be given to whether additional change will further detract from, or can enhance, the significance of the asset in order to accord with NPPF policies." **Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: Cumulative Impact Historic England (2015)**

"15. Of course, where the fabric has clearly failed, for whatever reason, or the layout constricts beneficial, compatible, use today, it will need to be repaired, and may need to be replaced or altered, but those repairs and/or alterations need to be carried out in a way which matches or complements the fabric and design of the listed building, thus following the policy in the NPPF. Retention of as much historic fabric with its evidential layers of history, layout and features as possible, together with the use of appropriate materials and methods of repair, is likely to fulfil the NPPF policy to conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their special interest. More information on these matters is available in Historic England Advice Note 2: Making Changes to Heritage Assets, particularly in section 3."

Listed Building Consent Historic England Advice Note 16 (2021)

As such, it is the Council's view, with support of the Council's Conservation Team, that the works are acceptable in terms of the balancing act as to the less than substantial harm. I trust this further evidence assists you.

Please let me know if you wish to amend your comments.

Kind Regards,

Andrew Thompson

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From: Anya Lucas <Anya@georgiangroup.org.uk>
Sent: Wednesday, August 9, 2023 11:49 AM
To: Andrew Thompson <Andrew.Thompson@Cherwell-DC.gov.uk>
Subject: Stratfield Farm, 374 Oxford Road, Kidlington, Oxfordshire, OX5 1DL - 22/01757/LB

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Dear Andrew Thompson,

22/01757/LB

Stratfield Farm, 374 Oxford Road, Kidlington, Oxfordshire, OX5 1DL

Alterations and repairs to listed farmhouse and annex; refurbishment and partial rebuilding of existing outbuildings to provide 2 no. dwellings; erection of 2 no. new dwellings; provision of car parking, bin and cycle stores; and access.

Thank you for informing the Georgian Group of the above application for Listed Building Consent. We are broadly content with what is proposed and welcome the repair and reuse of this Grade II listed early nineteenth century farmhouse which is presently a Building at Risk.

The replacement of concrete tiles with stone slates and the removal of the 1920s brick lean to represent clear heritage benefits and overall the internal alterations proposed are relatively modest. However, we suggest your authority needs to seek further information and justification from the applicant in respect of the proposal to form a new opening between the western front reception room (G3) and the kitchen (G7).

The applicant suggests there may formerly have been communication between these two rooms but at the moment this is only conjecture as no investigation of the fabric has been undertaken. Unhelpfully, no photographs of the two rooms affected have been provided with the application. It is clear from the documentation, however, that this new opening would entail loss of original fabric, and disrupt the historic planform and so in all likelihood cause a degree of harm to the special significance of the building.

Furthermore, the structural report enclosed with the application indicates the farmhouse is in a very poor state of repair and yet the Design and Access statement does not explain the impact of the proposed new opening – in the building's spine wall - on the overall structure. Again, this information and evidence should be provided before any consent is granted.

We draw your attention to the "great weight" paragraph (199) of the NPPF (2021): "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 to paragraph 200 which states that "any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a

designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification". In our view, the proposal to form a new opening within the listed farmhouse has not yet met those key policy tests and we urge you to seek further information and justification from the applicant before determining the application.

We hope these comments will assist.

Yours sincerely,

Anya Lucas

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