Design & Access Statement

Asset No. 135

Project No. 13501

West Cottage

Emmer Green

October 2021

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architectural heritage + design consultant

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Introduction

Client: Ms S. Booker

Site Address: 217 Peppard Road, Emmer Green, Reading, RG4 8TS

Date: 11 October 2021

1. West Cottage is a Grade II listed dwelling house located in Emmer Green, a suburb of Reading in the county of Berkshire.

West Cottage

2. The new owner, Ms Booker, wishes to carry out a general renovation of the building in order to improve its amenity as a modern family home, whilst simultaneously preserving and enhancing the surviving historic building fabric.

Existing Site & Setting

3. West Cottage is a two-storey, end-of-terrace, brick-built dwelling house, located on the south side of Peppard Road. To the rear is a single-storey extension which in 2005 was converted into a separate dwelling, number 217a Peppard Road.

West Cottage and terrace

4. West Cottage is set at the intersection of two main roads in the centre of Emmer Green and immediately opposite a small public park, car park and parade of shops.

Emmer Green (West Cottage centre)

Planning History

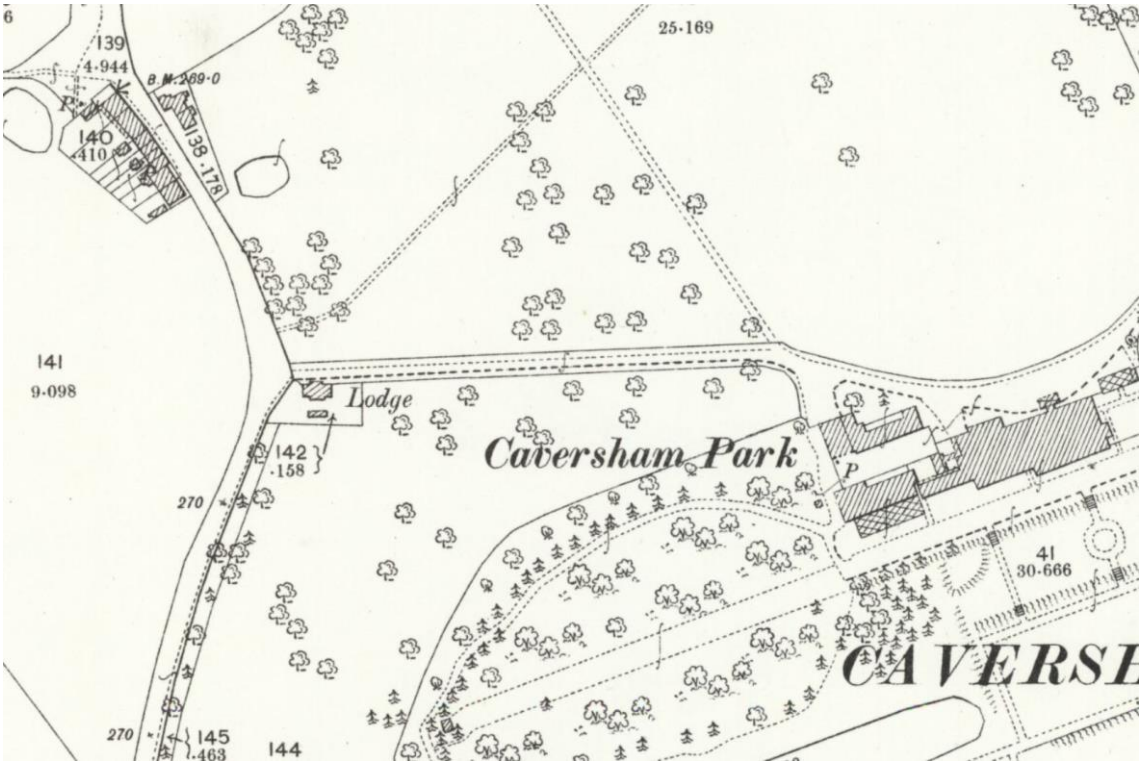
5. In 2004 planning permission was granted to annex the single storey rear extension to create a separate one bedroom dwelling, 217a Peppard Road (Reading Borough Council application No. 041422). The scheme also allowed for installing a new staircase to the historic house, orientated 180 degrees from its original position, to facilitate the creation of an upstairs bathroom and additional bedroom.

Proposed Works

6. Planning and Listed Building consent is sought for the proposed works detailed in Appendix I, and drawing nos.
    - 13501-211 Proposed Plan
    - 13501-212 Proposed Elevation

Heritage

7. Caversham was for many centuries a rural settlement in south Oxfordshire, reaching from the Thames in the south to the Chilterns to the north. Emmer Green is a historic hamlet in the north of Caversham. In the early 13th century Caversham Park was created by the enclosure of 300 acres of land as hunting grounds. The parkland was redesigned in the 18th century by the renowned landscape designer Capability Brown. The present Caversham Park House, a country house in the classical style, was built in 1850, replacing an earlier house that was destroyed by fire. It was owned and occupied by the BBC between 1939 and 2021.
8. In 1977 Caversham Park and Emmer Green were transferred from Oxfordshire to Berkshire and became suburbs of Reading. In 1964 a housing estate of some 1500 domestic houses was built on 156 acres of Caversham Park land. Caversham Park House and its remaining grounds have been recently sold for redevelopment, subject to planning approval by Reading Borough Council.
9. West Cottage is the end dwelling of a terrace of cottages built in the early 19th century at the boundary of Caversham Park and the hamlet of Emmer Green and thought to have been for the accommodation of staff employed on the estate.
10. West Cottage was built at a later date than the rest of the terrace, evidenced by a clear line in the brickwork between West Cottage and its neighbour. The façade of West Cottage continues the stylistic features and materials of the terrace, giving a generally unified appearance.
11. West Cottage is included in a group listing of the terrace (207-217 Peppard Road). The full listed building entry is available online at https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1113558



Caversham Park House, West Cottage and terrace to NW (1898)

12. The significance of a heritage asset is judged in terms of its special values as defined by Historic England (https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/statements-heritage-significance-advice-note-12/).
13. West Cottage has a modest degree of group Architectural and Artistic significance for its contribution to the principal façade of the historic terrace and its immediate setting. Additionally West Cottage has Historic significance for its association with the Caversham Park estate.

Appearance

14. The external appearance of West Cottage, in particular the principal NE façade, will be improved by the replacement of visually unsatisfactory modern materials with those more sympathetic to the historic building.

Site Layout, Amount & Scale

15. No changes to the existing.

Access, Landscaping & Sustainability

16. No changes to the existing.

Impact Assessment & Conclusion

17. Proposed works to a heritage asset can have a positive, neutral or negative impact on the asset's significance.
18. The proposed internal changes to West Cottage are intended to subtly enhance the functional amenity of the building as a modern dwellinghouse, whilst still respecting its original character. The change of the small bedroom 3 to an ensuite takes place in an area where the historic plan form of the house has already been changed by the approved re-siting of the staircase. The resultant small scale loss of historic fabric to create a doorway between bedroom 1 and the ensuite is considered to be less than substantial harm to the building.
19. Externally, the proposed changes, executed with materials and techniques sympathetic to the original building, will improve West Cottage's visual integrity and enhance its contribution to the listed terrace and its setting
20. In conclusion, the proposed refurbishment of West Cottage is considered to have a positive impact on the building's Architectural and Artistic, and Historic group significance.

Appendix I: Proposed Works

A. Remodel modern entrance lobby - reface façade in brickwork to match existing historic; new single door and sash window in painted hardwood to match existing fenestration.

Replacement of existing modern brickwork and fenestration.

No loss of historic building fabric.

B. Install new hardwood timber french doors Family Room.

Replacement of existing modern pvc fenestration.

No loss of historic building fabric.

C. Install new hardwood timber roof light to Family Room.

Replacement of existing modern pvc fenestration.

No loss of historic building fabric.

D. Remove existing window to SE elevation	
	Removal of existing modern pvc fenestration. *No loss of historic building fabric*

E. Install new lead roof to Family Room and Lobby in traditional batten roll design	
	Replacement of existing modern felt roof covering in a material and style sympathetic to the historic building. *No loss of historic building fabric.*

F. Install new hardwood timber casement window to downstairs W.C.	
	Replacement of existing modern pvc fenestration. *No loss of historic building fabric.*

G. Fit new timber newel posts, handrail and balustrades to staircase.

Replacement of modern staircase components..

No loss of historic building fabric.

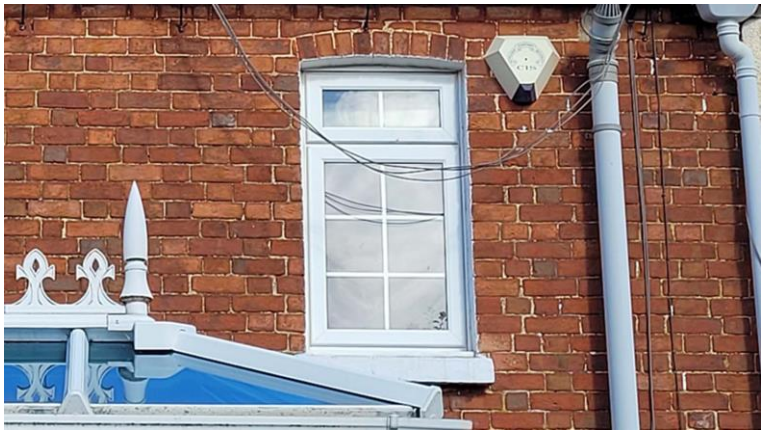
H. Convert Bedroom 3 into ensuite shower room to Bedroom 1

Reordering of modern partition walls to Bedroom 3. New services to run via existing floor voids.

I. Form new fitted wardrobes to Bedroom 1 and 2

Retain and reuse existing historic timber doors and frames.

No loss of historic building fabric

J. Install new hardwood timber sash window to Bathroom	
	*Replacment of existing modern pvc window. Use existing aperture in historic brickwork. New sash to match existing style and proportion of historic fenestration.* *No loss of historic building fabric.*

K. Generally carry out localised repairs to external historic brickwork as necessary	
	Removal of inappropriate and visually unsatisfactory cementitious mortars to preserve and enhance the historic building fabric.