

## **Design and Access Statement / Heritage Statement**

### **Grove Barn, Old Barn Close, Emmer Green, Reading, RG4 8QY**

NB – I have a listed building consent application currently being processed by Reading Borough Council, under reference PP-09043754. This is for new windows and is a separate project to the one subject to the consent now being asked for.

#### **Background**

(1) I purchased this Grade II listed barn in November 2018. The barn contains 6 sky-lights located in the following rooms:

- Landing
- Utility Room
- Master Bedroom
- Study
- Bathroom
- En-suite

(2) The sky-lights were installed when the barn conversion took place in 1989. They are beginning to show signs of wear and tear – e.g. several show signs that they could be leaking water, as the plasterwork beneath them is slightly discoloured.

(3) In addition to the general wear and tear, the installation is not in accordance with the normal way a sky-light should be – according to the Managing Director of the Company I have chosen to replace them. Basically, the frames of the skylights appear to be “sunken” into the roof, and there is a rather unattractive bordering of lead around each one. This can be seen in the photos in Appendix 1 – especially the second photo, where the sunken approach and lead work is clearly visible.

#### **The Proposal**

(4) I have a quotation from The Loft Access Company in Maidenhead for £22,142, to replace all 6 sky-lights. The work will be carried out by Velux accredited installers.

(5) The photographs in Appendix 2 provide examples of what the finished products will look like. It can be seen from these that the sky-lights protrude outwards from the roof plane, ensuring rain-water is channelled properly downwards. The sunken design of the existing ones has, we believe, permitted water to hang around within the frame, eventually finding a way through the roof and into the internal plaster.

(6) It can also be seen the new sky-lights will not have the unattractive lead work feature and are generally a much more attractive design.

(7) In terms of dimensions and specifications, the sky-lights will be the same size as the existing ones – the only point to note is covered in (8) and (9) below.

### **Planning Permission**

(8) I have checked the Planning Portal website. This states planning permission is not required for sky-lights if the alteration does not project more than 15 cm from the roof plane.

(9) You will note from The Proposal and the photos in Appendix 2 that the new sky-lights will project out from the roof – this is in fact one of the required features for the sky-lights to function correctly in rainy conditions. I have checked with The Loft Access Company and the new Velux sky-lights will project 5 cm from the roof – well within the tolerance.

(10) The above is my rationale for concluding planning permission is not required. I would, however, welcome any comments you have on this matter.

### **Heritage**

(11) The property is listed under reference 1321896 on [historic.england.org.uk](http://historic.england.org.uk).

(12) The works I am undertaking will help to keep the barn in good condition. Failure to undertake the work could result in water penetration which would be damaging to the timber construction and to the internal plasterwork.

(13) Additionally, the new sky-lights are considerably more attractive than the ones being replaced – reasons explained earlier in this statement. Looking at the photos in Appendix 2, the new design is, I believe, more in keeping with the look and feel of the barn. The lead trim visible on the current installation is certainly not in keeping with the style of the barn, and the new design is much more pleasing on the eye.

(14) I believe maintaining the barn in good condition, and improving the look of it with a new but complementary installation, will ensure the integrity of the listing.

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## **Appendix 1**

Photographs of four of the current sky-lights in my property.



## **Appendix 2**

Examples of the replacement sky-lights – clearly, this is not my property shown!

