

HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Project No: 17.110 - St Johns Lodge

Project Address: St Johns Lodge,
4 Star Road,
Caversham,
Reading,
Berkshire,
RG4 5BS

1.0 Introduction

This Heritage Impact Assessment has been prepared in support of the application for planning permission and listed building consent to erect a single storey rear extension at for St Johns Lodge, Reading, RG4 5BS.

This assessment sets out what is significant about the proposed work and analyses the impact of the proposals on the heritage assets.

2.0 The Nature of the Asset

St Johns Lodge is a combination of three individual cottages, with the original central cottage dating back to the 17th Century. Two further extensions in the late 18th and early 19th centuries added the right and left hand cottages respectively.

Over the last 300 years St Johns Lodge has been developed and integrated to become a whole house.

Historic England listing

STAR ROAD 1. 5128 (East Side) Caversham No 4 (St John's Lodge) SU 7274 6/281A 22.7.76. II 2. C17 origins with later extensions. 3 cottages of varying heights and dates, rendered and pebbledashed fronts. 2 storeys with modern tiled roofs, old tiles to rear. Centre and right hand cottages 2 bays each. Centre probably C17 with 2 modern 3 light oriels on 1st floor and verandah porch on ground floor, central reeded doorway (interior with contemporary stud partitions). Right hand part probably late C18, glazing bar sashes on 1st floor with blind boxes, central porch on ground floor, now 2 window. Left hand part early C19, 1 bay. Rear some glazing bar sashes, exposed timberwork in 2 gables, and in gabled break.

Ref 1321890, from 22nd July 1976:

3.0 The Extent of the Asset

The site is located on Star Road, Caversham and is within walking distance of both Caversham and Reading town centres.

The surrounding area is predominately high density residential accommodation dating to a later period of construction. Located directly opposite the house are modern 3 storey flats (Surrounding Context - Picture 1). Brick terrace houses form the majority of properties further along Star Road - West view terrace dates back to the late 19th Century (Surrounding Context - Picture 3).

The plot (St Johns Lodge) was split by a previous owner and a detached house, now known as 4a Star Road (Surrounding Context - Picture 4), was built in 1997.

The property is screened from Star Road by a large number of mature trees, with parking set behind the tree line at the front of the house. There is a large garden to the rear of the property with a number of mature trees along the east and south boundaries.

The property also includes a small outbuilding to the rear of the property which is currently used as a store.

4.0 The Significance of the Asset

The significance of the asset is undoubtedly its age and historic reference. The 17th century cottage is a prime example of historic timber frame construction.

5.0 Relevant Planning History

Demolition of stables (current use storage and garage)
Ref: 940936 (1994) - Application granted

Two semi-detached three bedroom two storey houses with integral garages.
Ref: 960235 (1996) - Application refused

Two storey, three bedroom detached house with integral garage.
Ref: 970784 (1997) - Application granted

Conversion of existing store to shower room at the rear on the first floor.
Ref: 041188 (2004) - Application granted

6.0 The Proposed Works & the Impact on the Asset

Extension

This proposal includes the provision of a new extension to bring light into some of the existing spaces through the corridor route, whilst also providing a new extension. The extension is intended to provide a modern, light and open plan living space with kitchen, dining area and snug, to complement the existing house whilst also accommodating modern family life. All of which has been considered while retaining and respecting the heritage and history of the property.

The height of the extension has been set so that it forms a balanced relationship between the gable end ensuring it remains subservient. The rear elevation of the extension is also staggered in order to maximise internal space whilst maintaining clear views of the gabled end from all points in the garden. This again helps to keep the extension subservient to the existing features.

Fireplace (Located in the existing kitchen)

The existing fireplace and chimney located in the existing kitchen is to be opened up and reused. A new log burning stove is to be installed.

Suspended timber floors

The existing floorboards on first floor are to be carefully removed and set aside. Leveling strips are to be installed over the existing joist to level out the irregular floor. The existing floor boards are to be reinstated in the correct order once the levelling strips have been installed.

Existing Kitchen & Decoration

The existing modern kitchen units are to be carefully removed and disposed of in accordance with local bylaws. Care and attention is to be maintained throughout the strip out so that no damage is caused to the historic fabric and features.

Existing surfaces requiring decoration are to be made good and any new material is to match the existing surrounding surfaces.

This work will preserve the character of the listed building.

7.0 Preserve, Enhance and Mitigate

The design proposal minimises impact and alterations to the existing fabric ensuring retention and accentuation of the existing historical features. A key consideration has been to ensure that the timber frame gable end remains the highlight of the rear elevation, with the extension sitting back from this.

The proposal sites the extension away from the gable end, to the south west corner of the property, with a clear gap between the new intervention and the gable end. The extension connects to the property through the rear corridor, which as highlighted in the Design & Access Statement, appears to be a recent addition. This therefore minimises any loss of historic fabric by creating the openings through this wall over any other.

The extension does not seek to alter the internal layout therefore preserving distinctive stages of development.

The use of modern insulation and double glazed units with Low-E coating and argon filled cavity will minimise the requirement for space heating therefore enhancing the property and allowing it to continue in use as a 21st century family home.

8.0 Conclusion

The proposals cause no harm to the significance of the listed building and the scheme offers modest benefits which will ensure a continued use of the dwelling as a family home whilst retaining the character of the original property. The new extension has not attempted to copy or imitate the original building and is making a clear architectural statement that this is the next stage of development.

The repair and refurbishment works to St Johns Lodge will be of a high quality and will bring the building up to modern standards of performance and functionality, securing its use for future generations.