

DESIGN STATEMENT

EXTENSION TO BALNACROFT COTTAGE, CRATHIE

For Drs N & P Smith

February 2021

Appraisal

The site has an open aspect with main view to the north east towards the Dee Valley. The client would like to open elevated views onto the other aspects around the site, although these are mainly established wooded areas.

The existing cottage is a good example of a typical, traditional, Aberdeenshire farm cottage built circa 1850 to 1900. It was refurbished around 20 years ago and has been well maintained since. The alterations are proposed to generally enhance the accommodation provision.

The cottage is in a rural setting and surrounding properties are of a similar traditional construction.

There has been historic ingress of water through the western corner of the building. It appears that this is caused by water draining down the slope from the west and becoming trapped in the west corner of the house. This is creating a high hydrostatic pressure against the exiting walls which retain the raised ground levels. The design is to address this issue.

Key Issues

- The site has good open views to the NE.
- Aside from the NE aspect, the site is largely surrounded by established woodland.
- The site is sloping generally from the west to the east.
- Any extension works are to be low maintenance.

Design Principals/Concepts

- The existing timber shed will be removed to make way for the extension.
- The NE view is to be embraced in the design.
- The extension is not to over-dominate the existing cottage.
- The building is to have a modern contemporary appearance to separate it visually from the existing cottage.
- It is to be constructed of low maintenance materials and details.

Design Solution

1. The existing driveway will be altered to allow vehicles to enter, park and turn near the site entrance rather than the current provision which requires vehicles to manoeuvre to the rear boundary.
2. The proposed form of the design is a dual pitched, 1½ storey extension with a single storey link. The pitch matches the existing house and uses similar small scale spans. It will create a domestic scaled cohesive group which does not detract from the existing cottage.
3. The extension will be of a more contemporary design form. The 1½ storey section will be clad with a black zinc to create a simple form that will 'recess' against the stone cottage. The flat roofed link is clad with timber and glass to delineate the two forms and separate the new works from the original building. The timber creates a 'softer feel' in the porch area. The black zinc contrasts well against the stone of the cottage allowing the stone to become the dominant material. The zinc finish will be low maintenance and its appearance will be consistent as it ages.
4. The north east gable has a heavily modelled frame to the timber cladding and glazing composition on the principal elevation to add more articulation to the design.
5. The external entrance area steps down to the existing floor level of the house. This avoids wasting internal space to change levels and since it faces south west will provide a welcome sunken area where people can sit around on the steps in the evening sun.
6. A generous covered porch provides shelter at the new entrance to the house. It includes a covered area for storing logs which, will incidentally provide an attractive contrast in texture against the zinc. Two traditional tree trunk columns will be used to support the roof and are a reflection of traditional porches in the region.
7. The extension will provide a much needed boot room and a master bedroom suite with an elevated quiet reading room.

Environment

8. The extension will be of an efficient, well insulated and air tight timber frame construction. It will not have a high demand for space heating but when required, this will be provided by an underfloor heating system on the ground floor and radiators on the first floor all fed from the existing LPG boiler.
9. A small wood-burning stove will be located in the new first floor sitting room.
10. The new master suite will provide accessible bedroom and bathroom facilities on the ground floor level.

Glen A Strachan
Architect

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