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Fao Felicity Byrne  
Planning and Regulatory Services  
Oxford City Council

\*\*\*By Electronic Means only\*\*\*

18<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Dear Felicity

**Application for revised siting and detail of Gardeners' Facilities. Revisions to the internal layout and use of the President's Garage and variation of the Small Quad landscape detail - Amended detail to Planning and Listed Building Consents 18/01340/FUL & 18/01341/LBC**

**At: Trinity College, Broad Street, Oxford**

This application is submitted on behalf of Trinity College and seeks both planning permission and listed building consent approval for amended details in respect of the above matters. The application comprises of the following documentation:

- This accompanying planning covering letter prepared by JPPC
- Heritage Impact Statement prepared by Asset Heritage Consulting
- Site Location Plan @ 1:1250 Drawing No. 5446/70B
- Proposed Block Plan @ 1:200 Drawing No. 5446/71B
- Small Quad - Existing Floor Plan @ 1:100 Drawing No. 5446/75
- Small Quad – Proposed Plans and Images @ 1:100 Drawing No. 5446/76
- Small Quad – Proposed Plan and Section Details @ 1:20 Drawing No. 5446/77
- President's Garage - Proposed Plans, Elevations and Section @ 1:100 Drawing No. 5446/80
- AIA prepared by Sylva Consultancy, Ref 20165/AIA
- AMS prepared by Sylva Consultancy, Ref 20165/AMS
- Planning Application fee paid via the Planning Portal

Please note that the planning application fee payable in connection with this proposal has been paid via the Planning Portal.

## Background

This submission follows the recent grant of both planning and listed building consent in late 2018 for the provision of new student facilities alongside replacement gardener's glasshouse and machinery/ tool store.

The John Phillips Planning Consultancy

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The changes stem from a refinement as the project passed through its design phases prior to the initial construction and following a dialogue with the Colleges' Governing Body who have acknowledged the significance and importance of the gardens to the setting of Trinity.

### **Proposed Development/ Revisions**

This application seeks planning and listed building consent for the following revisions:

#### Gardeners Facilities:

- Repositioning glasshouse from the northern boundary to the eastern boundary wall, no change to the size of the glasshouse
- Tool store has been shifted away from the North-western corner to have an improved alignment with the northern boundary line and the footpath. Revision to the dimensions 0.2m increase in depth but a reduction in length of 1.5m
- Marginal widening of footpath (no consent required, included detail for completeness)

#### President's Garage:

- Ground floor of Presidents garage to be re-purposed as gardeners' machinery store and office. Extant scheme proposed the area as a bin storage facility
- First floor to be retained as a residential flat but internal alteration (partition removal) to provide an open living area between the kitchen and sitting room (as per the 2018 consent).

#### Small Quad:

- Retention of the rose arbour, erection of timber trellis framework to the eastern boundary together with low-level brick planter to facilitate landscaped screen

### **Relevant Planning Considerations**

Setting aside the principle of these facilities which have already been accepted by the LPA, this application submission focuses on those key changes that have evolved and refined during the construction phase of the new student facilities accommodation.

The applications are accompanied by relevant technical reports to support to the key issues arising through the updated proposals, namely heritage and arboricultural matters.

Considering each area of change in turn:

#### Gardeners Facilities

The Heritage Report prepared by Asset Heritage correctly notes that replacement gardeners facilities were included in the 2018 planning applications and were subsequently approved by the LPA. Whilst this proposal seeks approval for amended positioning and detail, the scale, form and overall appearance of the proposed facilities is by and large the same. You will hopefully recall that these revisions have previously been shared with officers to gauge an informal view prior to the submission of a formal application.

In respect of the revised detail, Asset Heritage conclude:

*'The revised proposals make little change to the design of the new structures (the glasshouses is still to be toughened glass over a natural stone plinth, the store to be timber cladding over a natural stone plinth) but it is now proposed to provide a smaller tool shed, this is to be in the same location as the permitted structure but set at an angle away from the northern wall.*

*The position of the lean-to glasshouse has been revised and this is to be set against the eastern garden wall, in the location indicatively shown for the compost area and cold frame in the permitted scheme...*

In the heritage assessment of the revised gardeners' facilities detail, Asset maintain the proposed siting and arrangement continues to be within a discrete location, in the corner of the principal gardens. Asset go a step further and opine that this is a location where one would expect to see gardeners' facilities.

The repositioning of the lean-to glass house is also considered to be a slightly preferable siting since it be filtered and partially screened in views of the lawn from the west – screen being caused by the existing yew trees.

With regards to the tool store, this is proposed as smaller structure than the consented building and, at the very least will have a neutral impact, but most likely will provide an enhanced setting over and above the extant scheme.

In terms of overall heritage assessment, Asset conclude:

*'I am of the view that the revised gardeners' facilities will be at least as sympathetic to the heritage significance of this highly sensitive site (i.e. the setting of the listed buildings, including the adjacent walls but also views from the listed buildings of the Garden Quad and elsewhere, the character of the registered park and garden, and the character and appearance of the Central (University and City) Conservation Area) as the consented scheme.*

Given this conclusion on the heritage matters, we consider this part of the scheme to be compliant against local plan policies DH1 (High quality design) DH3 (Designated Heritage Assets) alongside wider guidance set out within the NPPF.

During October 2020 select tree survey data from the Sylva Consultancy 2018 Arboricultural Report was revised and updated, principally the south eastern corner of Trinity College, adjacent to the northern boundary wall which is shared with St Johns College.

The accompanying Arboricultural Impact Assessment notes that no trees will be removed to facilitate these revised proposals. The report acknowledges that the proposed footprint of the glasshouse will fall marginally within the RPA of a lime tree and that this tree is outside of the College's control and ownership. The incursion into the tree's RPA equates to approximately 2.5% of the total area.

Whilst a tree of this species would ordinarily require the entirety of its RPA, the reduced canopy together with its proximity to the existing boundary wall will represent a constraint to its overall growth which informs Sylva's findings and conclusions that this minor incursion will not impact adversely on the long-term health and condition of this tree.

It is also acknowledged that in order to facilitate these works and to use this area of the College's grounds for gardener's facilities, the existing footpath needs to be widened. This element of work will occur within the RPA of the row young-middle mature yew trees. Sylva conclude that due to the young nature of the trees, the trees can tolerate the necessary works and as such, it is not deemed that these works would be detrimental to the ability to successfully retain this group of trees. It is also important to acknowledge here that ordinarily the widening of an existing footpath within private grounds would not require planning permission. This detail has been included in the submission in the interests of completeness.

The application is further supported by an Arboricultural Method Statement that sets out those measures to be incorporated during the construction phase to ensure the longevity of those existing trees on the site is not compromised and that the trees can continue to make a positive contribution to the College gardens and wider conservation area in accordance with policy G7 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036.

### President's Garage Alterations

The 2018 planning proposal sought to utilise the ground floor area of the garage for a bin store. A separate application is to be submitted alongside this application seeking permission for the provision of an external bin store which frees up the internal ground floor area of the President's Garage – this is considered to be a better use of College buildings and resources. This application thus seeks to re-purpose the ground floor area for use as Gardener's office/respice space and storage of maintenance equipment.

At first floor level, it is proposed provide an open plan living environment between the kitchen and sitting room which is facilitated by the removal of an internal partition wall and this is a detail that formed part of the 2018 consent.

Asset Heritage make the following assessment:

*Regarding the President's Garage, this block was designed by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott in the 1930's alongside his design of the New Bodleian Library (now the Weston Library) in compensation for the loss of one of the college's buildings on Parks Road.*

*...the heritage value of this simple building is principally tied to its external character, its contribution to the street-scene and its group value with the listed New Bodleian Library.*

*As the revised application proposals relate only to the interior of the building, they will clearly have no impact on these elements of its heritage interest.*

The alterations to the President's Garage are considered to be reasonably innocuous and if anything, seek to provide a clear purpose to the building rather than the extant bin store area for the ground floor.

The proposals in our opinion comply with policy DH3 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036.

### Small Quad Alterations

This application seeks to amend the landscaping detail for the small quad area through the retention of the rose arbour and provision of timber trellis to facilitate climbing plants alongside raised beds with seating. The proposals will also see a replacement of the paving to a more traditional and sympathetic material – yorkstone setts.

The accompanying Heritage Statement notes that the proposals affecting the small quad are 'minor in nature and, ...will not have any discernible impact in heritage terms'.

The proposals thus accord with policy DH5 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036.

## **Conclusion**

I hope this submission provides a useful summary and frame of the key issues surrounding the proposal and the relevant planning considerations. Asset Heritage conclude overall that they are firmly of the opinion that these application proposals would not result in any harm in heritage terms, including to the significance of the listed buildings of Trinity College, the character of the Trinity College registered park and garden, or the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

We believe it has been demonstrated that the revised design approach is suitably respectful of its sensitive location and would successfully assimilate into the grounds of Trinity College without impacting on or compromising the significance of designated heritage assets.

It is hoped and reasonably anticipated that officers will be happy to support the proposal and to recommend that planning permission is duly granted subject to any conditions that are considered necessary and reasonable. Section drawings have been included within the submission in the hope that sufficient has been provided to minimise any pre-commencement conditions.

I look forward to receiving the application acknowledgement letters shortly and thereafter trust you will not hesitate to contact me should there be any queries regarding the proposals.

Yours faithfully

Natasha Ireland BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

Associate

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