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Grove Park, Cherrington, nr Tetbury

Statement on heritage and planning matters accompanying application for listed building consent

December 2021

Introduction

1. This Statement accompanies an application for listed building consent to Cotswold District Council for internal works comprising refurbishment and redecoration at Grove Park. The property is listed Grade II.
2. This Statement has been prepared pursuant to the guidance contained in Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021) and the Planning Practice Guidance: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment. Regard has also been paid to Historic England's Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets (2019) and Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (2015). The Statement sets out findings regarding the history and evolution of the building and assesses the proposed works for the property.
3. Paragraph 194 of the NPPF states that applications for consent affecting heritage assets should be accompanied by a description of the significance of the heritage asset affected and their contribution to their setting of that significance. An assessment of the impact of proposed development against this significance must then be made. In order to undertake the required assessment of significance and impact the following was undertaken in preparation of this Statement:
 - Review of the statutory records for the property.
 - Review of Cotswold's published documentation and policies on the area.
 - Research of other published documentation relating to the property.
 - Review of past planning applications for the building.
 - A site visit in December 2021
4. The Statement has been prepared by Christian Leigh BSc(Hons), MPhil (Dist), MRTPI. I have over 25 years' experience on projects concerning Grade I, II* and II residential and commercial properties within Southern England and London. Wider work involves heritage appraisals, planning and listed building application and appeals, and enforcement matters. I have prepared advice



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relating to conservation area designations. Clients include a number of the London Estates, local and central Government, as well as major developers and householders. I am currently Associate Lecturer in planning law and practice, including heritage matters, at the Henley Business School, University of Reading.

History of the property

5. What is now called Grove Park was originally Grove Farm, established following the enclosure of the Parish in 1730. The Farm dates from the period of ownership of the Neale family, and John Neale who died in 1746. The Farm passed to his wife and, when she died in 1804, it was sold to John George who increased the size of the estate with the purchase of Glebe land and Coxe's Farm.
6. In 1878 the estate passed to the two surviving members of the George family, Gertrude and Constance, but during the late 19th Century and early 20th Century the estate declined due to the agricultural and world economic depression. Constance died in 1931 and Gertrude sold the estate in 1934, when she was bankrupt.
7. Edward Smedley Tarlton purchased the Farm, along with others in the area. He died in 1955 when the larger estate was divided up between his three children. Geoffrey Tarlton inherited Grove Farm and 500 acres, along with other properties in the parish, and took over the running of Grove Farm although he lived elsewhere and the Farm was tenanted.
8. The property was listed in 1954, with the list description reading as follows:

*ST 99 NW
CHERINGTON - 4/44
Grove Farmhouse*

6.9.54 GV II

Farmhouse. Datestone "RWH 1741". Coursed rubble stone with flush stone quoins and hipped Cotswold stone slate roof with central valley. Stone stacks on east and west ridges. Moulded and coved stone eaves cornice. Roof now has 2 skylights in each face, forming 2 storeys with attic. Square range with lean-to along north side. South front has 3 windows, 12-pane sashes with plain stone architraves. Plat band just above ground floor windows, 2 similar to 1st floor, with central round headed doorcase with moulded architrave and 6-panel partially glazed door and radial fanlight. Some internal joinery still extant. ,

9. It is understood the condition of the farm declined in the late 20th Century, with barns and outbuildings becoming dilapidated and some in partial collapse. A new owner of the farm arrived in the early 21st Century and obtained a series of planning permissions and listed building consents 06/03082/FUL & 06/03081/LBC, 06/03082/FUL & 07/03378/LBC and 09/02203/FUL & 09/02205/LBC (as amended by 10/00415/FUL & 10/00417/LBC, 10/01393/FUL & 10/01393/FUL and 13/00831/FUL & 13/00832/LBC). These works saw the large two storey extension on the northern side of the farmhouse, conversion and works to the outbuildings, and internal and external works to the farmhouse. These have been implemented at the property, with a high standard of craftsmanship.

Appraisal of the Farmhouse

10. The works proposed in this application relate to what was the original farmhouse at Grove Park, and the later additions to that property. Hence, this Statement concentrates on appraising that building, with only brief reference to the wider farm buildings.
11. The main farmhouse itself is believed to date from 1741 and is of a square plan with four rooms on each floor, with a service range on the north elevation. The roof is hipped on each corner with a central hidden flat roof section. The principal elevation to the house is to the south, facing onto the garden with a centrally placed front door. The house was remodelled and rebuilt in the past on this elevation: evidence shows there was once a large porch which has been removed, the central and left hand first floor windows have been increased in depth with a new sill inserted, and the two chimneys are not identical. The roof structure at the front has also been rebuilt. It is understood those changes were in the early 19th Century.
12. The east elevation is altered with a blocked central door, which is likely due to the separation of the house from the working farm.
13. The north elevation has been altered with the extensions referred to earlier which have seen the single storey and two storey addition attached to the house and link at ground floor and basement to the former farm outbuildings.
14. The interior of the farmhouse has been altered, reflecting the changes in ownership over the 19th and 20th Centuries. Early 19th Century changes can be seen in the staircase and the larger sash windows that have been inserted to the principal elevation, which also has panelling around those windows and panelled doors. Room plans on the ground floor have been altered: the original hallway from the main door in the southern elevation has been opened up to provide one main living space. This has led to a rather imbalanced appearance to this large room, particularly as that room now contains one unusually large segmental arch fireplace and one more conventionally sized early 19th Century fireplace.
15. The space within the attic is accessed via later stairs, with alterations to the space evident through the existence of supporting structures within the roof space. It appears from the list description – from 1954 – that the use of this attic space as living accommodation was a later evolution of the property, since it states that the roof ‘*now has*’ two skylights on each roof slope, ie they were not identified as being an original part of the house. The sales particulars for the estate from 1934 refer to there being storage rooms in the attic. Those skylights have since been replaced for dormers on each roof slope, which were part of the previous 2009 permissions.
16. The wider estate of Grove Park sees the collection of buildings that represent the evolution and development of the former Grove Farm. This sees the range of farm buildings to the south and the granary to the north that were mostly built during the late 19th Century and early 19th Century, which was a period of prosperity for farming in the area. It is understood the condition of some of these buildings deteriorated during the later part of the 20th Century, with some barns in a very poor condition. In the early 21st Century they were sensitively restored and adapted following the grant of permissions and consents referred to earlier. This included what was a necessary insertion of major

works of modern materials which altered the layout, but the general appearance of the farm as a small estate remains with these changes.

17. The farmhouse has historical significance in the appearance of the elevations and the internal floor plan by showing how the original Grove Farm developed over the years. It displays its origins as an 18th Century farmhouse, which was then remodelled and rebuilt at the front in the 19th Century. The height of the building over the farm buildings, and the slightly elevated position above the farmyard, gives the house extra prominence in its group setting with the wider estate and the landscape.
18. The square plan form and regular hipped roof, now with symmetrical dormers, adds to the solidity in appearance and form. The house is set away from the farmyard and the outbuildings, though with clear physical and functional connection to those uses. The modern extensions to the farmhouse are subservient in scale and design and so have kept the nature of the farmhouse as the principal domestic building on the site.
19. The significance of the property as a heritage asset therefore derives from the appearance of the building, the relationship to the farm buildings and setting in the landscape, and evidence within the building as to how it has evolved over the years with the changing fortunes of farming in this part of the Cotswolds.

Appraisal of proposed works

20. Paragraph 197 of the NPPF says local planning authorities should take into account the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets. It is further stated at paragraph 200 that the significance of a heritage asset can be harmed or lost through alterations. However, paragraph 017 of the Planning Practice Guidance advises that

'In general terms, substantial harm is a high test, so it may not arise in many cases. For example, in determining whether works to a listed building constitute substantial harm, an important consideration would be whether the adverse impact seriously affects a key element of its special architectural or historic interest. It is the degree of harm to the asset's significance rather than the scale of the development that is to be assessed.'

21. The previous section of this Statement has undertaken an appraisal of the significance of the subject property. The proposed works relate to the interior of the main house and some of the converted buildings.
22. Works to the **main farmhouse** at ground, first floor and attic space are mainly the removal of later fixings and fittings, including modern built-in cupboards and other furniture. Redecoration would occur throughout. The general floorplan would remain, with a change at first floor only in the current en-suite to facilitate a new layout. The layout in that room has been altered in the past, so no harm arises from this.
23. The layout within the attic space would change to facilitate a new arrangement of en-suite bedrooms. As noted earlier, the layout of this attic space is not original since the current stair access and arrangement of the rooms at this level, with dormers, were all established with the early 21st Century alterations. In any event, the proposed layout still retains the simple cellular patten of four rooms.
24. At ground floor it is proposed to reduce the size of the fireplace opening in the drawing room, which is the over-sized opening that is an imbalance to that seen in the attached library. As noted earlier, this whole area has been opened up in the past and the front of the house rebuilt when there was significant remodelling in the 19th Century. The evidence is unclear, but it is likely changes to fireplaces occurred at that time, or during the early 20th Century when further alterations occurred to the property. The introduction of a fireplace and opening that would be of closer proportions to that seen in the library room would be of benefit in unifying this large space which otherwise seems imbalanced. Furthermore, as these altered openings do not play an important role in the significance of the house or the Farm as a whole, there would not be any effect on the significance of the heritage asset.
25. The alterations to the **northern extension** only comprise internal changes to this modern area of work (the area labelled reception hall onward is the modern addition). These again are all sensitive changes that represent the removal of built-in areas of work to the rooms, which would not have any effect on the appearance of the building. The hierarchy and floor plans of the rooms would remain and no effect would occur to the significance of the building.

26. The **granary** was converted as part of the early 21st Century works to provide accommodation capable of being an annex to the house, which comprised the insertion of a first floor internally. The new owners of the property wish to use it for this, and for it to be able to accommodate an elderly relative staying.
27. However, a shortcoming of this conversion to an annex is the two levels: an elderly relative with mobility problems cannot reach the bedroom on first floor. It is proposed to install a lift and a downstairs WC, which will necessitate a new staircase arrangement. The stairs in the granary are entirely modern, and sit in a large entrance lobby that is also a modern intervention into the building. This change will therefore have no effect on the significance of the building, and brings benefits due to access improvements.
28. At first floor in the granary a new en-suite would be formed. This is necessary in order to provide personal facilities for the owner's elderly relative who will use this space. Again, as this affects a modern part of the building, with no change to the exterior of the building or the main spaces in the granary, this will not have any effect on significance.
29. The '**stook**' is part of the building attached to the barn, which provides ancillary accommodation but, like the granary, is deficient in facilities. The proposals show the existing en-suite at first floor modified to serve the existing ancillary bedroom there.
30. The **groom's cottage** was created with the conversion of the barn in the early 21st Century and the layout and fittings are hence modern. The works see alterations only to these modern elements and the modification of the existing en-suite, to improve facilities in this ancillary staff accommodation. This would not affect the historic interest of the building.
31. **In summary**, the impact of the works on the significance of the building would therefore be neutral. There would be no effect on the exterior of the building. Internally, the changes would also be neutral, with works relating to modern elements of the building. Where there are changes to original fabric or the layout of rooms, those changes would not impact upon the recognised significance of Grove Park as a heritage asset.
32. It is thus considered that the works would not lead to any harm to the significance of the heritage asset, and so – consistent with the guidance contained in paragraph 017 of the Planning Practice Guidance – the provisions of paragraphs 200-202 of the NPPF would not apply. Furthermore, there are benefits arising from the proposal, namely improving disabled access within the ancillary accommodation, and providing better private en-suite facilities within the property and ancillary accommodation.
33. It is therefore concluded that the works shown in this application would not harm the recognised significance of the property, and that there are clear public benefits arising from the works. Thus, the scheme is consistent with the NPPF and Policies EN1, EN2 and EN10 of the Cotswold District Local Plan (2018).