

HERITAGE STATEMENT

**Proposed alterations and additions to
Lavandula, Becky Hill, Lower Slaughter, Gloucestershire, GL54 2HS
For**

Trevor Daniels

Kitchen extension

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Location

Lavandula Cottage is situated in the heart of a very traditional Cotswold vernacular styled village in Lower Slaughter. The residential building group comprising a very attractive large 1½-storey detached unit with a separate single storey guest annexe set within a charming walled secluded garden off a narrow service lane all as shown and described within the submission block layout plan.

This historic traditional Cotswold village is both a Conservation Area and an Area of Outstanding Beauty.

Description

The property is a Grade II Listed house built in Cotswold limestone under a stone slate high pitched roof as shown and described by the Drawings as Existing and enclosed photographs. It is believed to date from the early 17th century with many period features throughout.

Walls are principally random rubble limestone brought to course in gauged lime mortar with sawn stone quoins at corner returns. Fenestration is of Cotswold traditional vernacular detailing harmonizing with many of the buildings in this locality.

Windows of traditional fully divided metal casements set in sawn stone window surround sets. Stone flush sills, stone lintels and label moulded head cornices over the lintels and sawn stone moulded mullions. The high chimneys again are of sawn stone to contrast with the general wall pattern, with moulded stone copings.

The principal unit appears to have had two later additional attachments. To the north frontage gable end a small single storey cramped kitchen extension with flat roof and stone parapet surround with pronounced deep copings.

The second addition being a small single storey stone entrance lobby with cloakroom set into the garden on the west side. This appears closer in age to the original construction but curiously has an eccentrically pitched stone slated roof, the fenestration however entirely matches the window openings to the main structure.

The principle feature elevation is to the south gable end facing into the walled garden courtyard; its main features being too wide and relatively large window combinations to ground and first floor. Regrettably a rise in ground level detracts from the proportions and lifts the ground 450mm above the finished floor level giving rise to damp problems to the solid stone wall. Despite the glazed area, arising from the very low ceiling level to the ground floor and lack of flank wall glazing, the sitting room benefits little from this feature in terms of lighting, or of gaining good visual or actual relationship with the beautiful garden.

The internal principle feature throughout is the low cramped ceiling with exposed beams and plastered ceilings.

Flooring to the sitting room appears to be a fairly modern boarded floor with the remaining accommodation including the newer kitchen and entrance lobby in traditional stone flagstones.

The first floor ceilings are of reasonable height taking shape from the 1½-storey format of the roof with plastered ceilings throughout. First floor covering comprises carpeting finish to original pine boarding throughout.

Despite being a large residential unit its accommodation affords only two bedrooms both with en-suite bathrooms of fairly modern introduction. A third bedroom has been created within the detached single storey garage unit and outbuilding on the west side of the site.

This structure comprises a very crude and much later addition of an enclosed garage. Externally the unit is formed in matching random rubble natural limestone brought to course with sawn stone corner returns.

The roof is still moderately high pitched with stone slate covering to match the house but is of lesser pitch and of single storey construction.

The internal finish is of modern fair faced concrete blockwork and brickwork. To the front gable is included a modern segmental wood boarded panel garage door on metal tracks to slide into retention inside the garage when open.

The flooring is of modern simple concrete construction with plasterboard ceiling to a modern roof structure over.

The main section of the building is much older with much higher stone slate covered roof but again of modern roof construction. It appears that the original outbuilding would have been modernised into the present accommodation with the addition of a lower pitched roof extension southward to include an outside utility room and a modern bathroom to service the converted bedroom/study.

Again it is constructed in traditional Cotswold vernacular style but cruder and less sophisticated in terms of detailing and fenestration detail than the principle house. Its history describes its subservient role in its simplicity. Windows and doors are simply set into stone walled openings without adornment. The joinery is again simple and unsophisticated but the window divisions are maintained to echo the principle unit.

Simple reconstructed stone lintels adorn the external openings without sawn stone quoins or label moulding.

The principle central section is full 1½-storey in terms of verge compared with the single storey garage extension to the north which butts into the transverse roof pitch of the principle.

As a unit it is functional but entirely impractical and in terms of accommodation is inefficient and difficult to implement because of its isolation. The size and indeed the value of the house unit fully justify three bedroom usage yet this third bedroom annex is entirely separate from the main house accommodation particularly through the winter months. For family use this is entirely impractical.

Similarly the garage unit is useful but this is a relatively large site and three-car informal parking is entirely achievable on site on a slightly extended gravel drive parking area freeing up this useful space into actual residential accommodation as our proposals demonstrate.

The site naturally forms into the front access area for pedestrian and vehicular use with the rear large secluded garden courtyard providing extremely good amenity area for the unit.

Site setting

The general form and pattern of development in this locality is set by the River Eye running through between the housing to the north and to the south. The residential units on the north being smaller and very much in terrace form with much more Georgian style fenestration though in the vernacular character of stonework and stone detailing with natural stone slate roofing. On the south side of the river there is again terracing but our unit forms a slight break in individual houses with larger gardens set back within natural stone enclosed walled gardens.

The principal feature of the house is the main unit sited on the east boundary and a lower smaller ancillary separate unit sited on the west boundary; this latter unit having been extended with the addition of a single storey garage with pitched roof.

Similarly the principal house has been extended with a very small single storey flat roofed kitchen and the evidence of this extension is demonstrated by the original quoined sets clearly shown on the east elevation where the single unit abuts to the original.

Whilst an attempt has been made to reflect the original character of the fenestration within the three-panel kitchen window to the north incorporating stone mullions and stone surrounds in the style of the existing, the door entrance and small window on the west elevation to the kitchen has simple stone sawn quoins from a different quarry to the principle house and without detail to match the surround. It is noticeable that simple sawn stone lintels have been used without mouldings and without label mould.

Proposal

Regrettably the house is subject to flooding arising from its close proximity to the River Eye and the fact that this section of the village is very much at the lower end of the basin with the open countryside particularly to the south being much higher tends to discharge water down through the site and to the river. This has become problematic with climate change as the area is subject to flash flood storms where the system can for a brief time be overloaded resulting in flooding to the principle dwelling.

The house currently is under repair following such a flood incident where it is necessary to lift the original flagstones for cleaning purposes and to attempt to incorporate flood mitigation actions to attempt to waterproof the floor in conjunction with waterproofing to the lower sections of the external stone walls in the hope of avoiding future occurrence.

Kitchen extension

The main dwelling comprises generous existing reception rooms yet the kitchen extension is very cramped and arising from its shape is very difficult to fit out rationally.

A modest 1 metre extension forward (northward) to the existing unit will substantially improve the facility without noticeably modifying the appearance of the building or having adverse effect to the elevations. The intention is to maintain the overall height of the exterior walls whilst raising the existing roof 150mm behind the parapet to incorporate a flat glazed roof lantern. Essentially we propose moving the existing north wall forward maintaining the three-panel window in size, scale and detail but centring it to the north wall as shown on the enclosed drawings.

The kitchen will remain small by comparison to the rest of the unit and therefore we think it advantageous to move the door on the east elevation to enable more kitchen fitting units to be incorporated within the unit. This provides opportunity to replace the poor detailing of the existing door and tiny window and replace it with a single window unit in style and detail to

match the windows throughout the principal building incorporating label moulding and sawn stone moulded mullions and surrounds.

As will be seen from the existing and proposed block layout plans, this has very little impact on the principal dwelling unit and no adverse effect in terms of the garden and its proportion to the built structures. As will be seen from the block plan the unit does not project forward of existing built structures to the west or to the structures to the east and we will essentially maintain the existing appearance to the roadway.

In terms of materials we will simply extend existing stonework, re-form the north window newly centred to the kitchen in its original metal frame window to stone set mullions and moulded surround incorporating a projecting label mould over its head. Similarly we will re-form the existing door and small side window into a traditional matching window of the format of the north facing window in harmony and to match the existing house windows.

The height of the stone parapet and its format will not change although we will take advantage of the extension of the roof to include for a flat glazed lantern. Internally the original flagstones will be renovated and re-laid onto a new floor base incorporating the same insulated structural format and flood mitigation defences as included within the general renovation through the building to the existing ground floor. Internal walls will be plastered to match existing where the extension occurs and finishes will also match the existing.

Photographic study

We enclose photographs of the external elevations to record materials in use currently together with a detailed photographic study of the interior to the kitchen.

We confirm that all kitchen fittings will be retained and where new fittings are incorporated they will be to the style to match the existing. All worktop finishes will be retained and re-used, all tile fittings, plaster finish work and ceiling finishes will be retained or matched where new and we confirm that the modified roof will be covered in limestone pea shingle to match the existing.

We further confirm that the flagstone floor will be lifted and renovated and that the stonework will be re-laid.