

Planning Registration Team
Mendip District Council
Our reference: 22046.ta
11th October 2022

Dear Sir/ Madam

Householder Application: Lower Lodge, Ston Easton BA3 4DF
Proposal: Rear extension, raising of the boundary wall and formation of new driveway and associated landscaping works

1.0 Introduction

PlanningSphere act for Wellesley Group Limited, who are the freehold owners of the application site which comprises Lower Lodge and its associated residential curtilage. We are instructed to submit a householder planning application in respect of the above proposal. The application is supported by the following information:

Application form and biodiversity checklist proforma: PlanningSphere
Application fee: £206.00 plus Planning Portal fee of £32.20
Planning Cover Letter: PlanningSphere
Site Location Plan: Watson, Bertram and Fell
Existing Drawing Pack (2 No. Drawings) Prism Measured Survey
Proposed Drawing Pack (5 No. Drawings): Watson, Bertram and Fell
Tree Protection Plan: Assured Trees
Arboricultural Survey and Method Statement: Assured Trees
Heritage Statement: Michael Heaton Heritage Consultant
Planning Cover Letter: PlanningSphere

2.0 Site Description and Context

(i) Site Location

Lower Lodge stands within a tight, woodland-enclosed corner of the A37, on the north side of a redundant vehicular access to Ston Easton Park, approximately 300m southwest of Ston Easton House and c. 400m north of the main part of Ston Easton village.



Figs 1 & 2: Extract from Mendip District Council online map – the blue star shows the location of site. Fig 2 is photograph of the south facing entrance elevation of the vacant lodge building

(ii) Existing Site Access and Park

There are two existing points of access. The south access is owned by Stone Easton House and is substandard in terms of exit visibility being on the inside of a bend on the busy A37. The applicant has user rights over this access but there is no formalised parking area serving the application property within southern part of the curtilage of the application site. NB. the cars shown in Figure 1 below were parked on a temporary basis during a site inspection but there are no rights to permanently park cars in this bellmouth.



Fig 3. View of the existing access adjacent to the application site which serves Ston Easton House

The northern vehicular access is via the lane that runs adjacent to the northern boundary of the site. The existing turning area that is accessed via the stone pillared gateway is currently overgrown but there is a space for parking of two vehicles for with turning, as existing.



Fig 4. The existing access on the northern boundary of the access provides access to an overgrown parking and turning area.

(iii) Heritage Context

The application property is a gatehouse lodge of Ston Easton House and Park of 18th century origin but modified throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. It is not a 'curtilage' building of Ston Easton House, being too distant and functionally separate from the house, and is thus not affected by designation of the house as a Grade 1 Listed Building.

In architectural terms the 'best side' of the lodge is its south elevation because of the symmetry

of its windows, porch and blocked door opening. The other elevations lack any aesthetic attributes. Further information on the site history is set out in the Heritage Statement prepared by Heaton Heritage Consultants.

(iv) Ecological Context

The application site has been inspected by Engain. No roosting bats were found in the lodge building during the emergence surveys that were conducted in 2022. No other protected species were noted.

(iv) Arboricultural Survey

An arboricultural survey was undertaken by Assured Trees in 2022. The most significant tree identified proximate to the proposed works is a mature Beech tree (08) which is classed A2.

(v) Existing Lawful Use and Planning History

The vacant application property was last used as staff accommodation in association with the hotel at Ston Easton House. The lawful use of the existing property and its associated residential curtilage is a single dwelling (Class C3). Recorded planning history retrieved from the Mendip District Open Access planning application database is set out below:

Reference	Description	Decision
060321/031	Renewal of permission for erection of single storey extension	Permitted 25.04.1998
060321/032	Erection of single storey extension	Permitted 01.04.1998
060321/025	Single storey extension to existing single storey lodge	Permitted 08.04.1993
060321/026	Extension to single storey lodge	Permitted 27.04.1993
060321/024	Formation of second storey within single storey extension and two storey side extension (renewal)	Refused 17.11.1992
060321/019	Formation of second storey within single storey extension and two storey side extension	Refused 05.01.1988

3.0 Summary of proposals

Householder planning permission is sought for a rear extension of contemporary style, associated internal alterations and the raising of the boundary wall that currently encloses it to a height consistent with that of an 18th century parkland boundary wall.



Fig 5. View of the existing boundary wall adjacent to the A37. Part of the wall is proposed for raising and incorporation into the proposed extension

The extension of the lodge is proposed as a single storey rectangular block attached to the northeast corner of the lodge. Contemporary materials and styling are proposed for the walls and roof coverings which would change the external appearance, however the essential form and principal south facing elevation would remain unaffected and the extension would be hidden from public view by the proposed raising of the boundary wall by c. 2m to provide both privacy and acoustic mitigation. Extracts from the Proposed Site Plan and Floor Plan are detailed below.



Fig 6. Extract from proposed site plan and Fig. 7 Extract from proposed floor plan

Access to the site will be via the existing access to the north. The existing parking and surfacing area will be gravelled behind a hard surfaced entrance threshold at the gate to provide 2 No. surface parking spaces. This will necessitate the removal of 2 no. Cherry trees and a small squirrel damaged Sycamore tree.

The aboricultural report provides a methodology for installing an internal access drive over a cellular ground protection system to be installed directly onto existing ground level and surfaced with a gravel porous wearing course. Three trees will require crown lifting to provide 3m clearance over the proposed driveway. The internal access will terminate at the extension with the provision of one further parking space and an associated turning area.

The part of the proposed extension that encroaches upon the retained Beech tree root protection zone will be constructed using a pile and beam foundation with a finished floor above existing ground levels.

Foul and surface water disposal will connect into existing services.

4.0 Planning Policy Context

Section 38(6) of the Town and Country Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires local planning authorities to determine planning applications in accordance with the Development Plan unless material planning considerations indicate otherwise.

(i) Development Plan

For the purposes of this application the Development Plan for the site comprises: the adopted Mendip District Local Plan Part 1 (adopted 2014). Applicable designations to the application site include Policy DP3 as noted in Figure 7 below.



Fig. 7 Extract from the Mendip District Council Planning site (area of policy DP3 under shaded area)

Relevant development plan policies include:

- CP1: Mendip Spatial Strategy
- CP4: Sustaining Rural Communities
- DP1: Local Identity and Distinctiveness
- DP3: Heritage Conservation
- DP4: Mendip's Landscapes
- DP7: Design and Amenity of New Development
- DP8: Environmental Protection

(ii) National Planning Policy Framework – NPPF

National planning policy and guidance is set out in the NPPF (July 2021) and web-based guidance in the NPPG (from 2014). There is a strong focus upon housing delivery and bringing vacant previously developed land and buildings back into beneficial use. The following sections from the NPPF are relevant to the application:

- Section 2 – Achieving sustainable development
- Section 4 – Decision making
- Section 5 - Delivering a sufficient supply of homes
- Section 11 – Making effective use of land
- Section 12 – Achieving well designed places
- Section 16 – Conserving and Enhancing the historic environment

5.0 Planning Assessment and Conclusions

The application proposal has been formulated with specialist arboricultural, ecological and heritage surveys. The proposals will bring back into use a vacant dwelling.

The proposals will fully modernise and extend the existing dwelling to enable it to support modern C21 contemporary living with an open plan kitchen and dining room with an outlook over the adjacent garden area. The comprehensive refurbishment of the existing structure will renew the existing services and enhance levels of sound and thermal insulation. The new section of raised boundary wall will provide additional noise insulation from the nearby main road which will further enhance residential amenity.

The design of the extension is contemporary in style but will be subservient to the form of the original lodge building.

The new driveway and parking area will provide a safe means of access with 3 No. off-street parking spaces. The driveway works will be constructed in accordance with the arboricultural method statement and secured by a compliance planning condition.

Details of new replacement tree and shrub planting, and surfacing of the driveway and entrance threshold, can be secured by a landscaping pre-commencement condition.

The applicant will accept the ecological recommendations for the provision of bat boxes. Implementation of the proposed ecological mitigation can be secured by a compliance planning conditions.

The proposal is considered to be in full compliance with applicable development plan policies. On this basis the Council is respectfully requested to grant planning permission pursuant to NPPF: Paragraph 11c.



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