

# **ALTERATIONS AT THE PANT, CROSS ASH, ABERGAVENNY, MONMOUTHSHIRE**

## **HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

### **1.00 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.01 A full planning application for amendments to a first floor bathroom and ground floor w/c to incorporate a shower within the main house and alterations to a curtilage building at The Pant, Cross Ash has been submitted to Monmouthshire County Council. The main dwelling is Grade II listed, CADW reference 24298. (Appendix 1).
- 1.02 A pre-application consultation with the Monmouthshire County Council has taken place. The case officer Lindsay Christian's response ref DM/2022/01139 dated 6<sup>th</sup> September 2022 is attached (Appendix 2). The points raised under the heading "Principle of Development" within the pre-app response will be addressed in this statement. This heritage impact assessment (HIA) has been prepared as requested by the Conservation Officer.
- 1.03 The HIA will support the application and shall follow the best practice guidelines issued by CADW in May 2017. Its main aim will be to address the concerns raised by the Conservation Officer during the pre-app consultation process. In particular it will concentrate on the appropriateness of the proposed dwelling's scale and design in relation to the nearby listed buildings. The assessment will demonstrate that the applicants have understood the historic context of the site and how this understanding has informed the design process. The proposals will be discussed under the following headings.
- The importance of the Dwelling
  - Importance of the site and its relationship to the adjoining listed properties.
  - Design Concept.
  - Assessment of the impact of the proposals on its historic context.
  - Conclusion.

### **2.00 THE IMPORTANCE OF THE DWELLING**

- 2.01 The pant has been listed as a C17 gentry house of vernacular character and linear form, with well-preserved interior, retaining fine C17 woodwork.

The Listed building description it states the following: -

The reused cruck blades in the roof of the former cellar possibly survive from an earlier cruck framed hall-house that may have existed on the site. Whatever its original form, the present house is largely mid C17 in character. Although the two principal ground-floor rooms have ovolo ceiling beams with

flat and scroll stops which are likely to date from 1650-60, the room at the upper end, probably the original hall, may have earlier origins. The monolithic fireplace lintel and sunk chamfer gable doorway in the hall are of an earlier stylistic type, generally dated to between c1600-1625. One explanation is that the hall was built first and later revamped in the mid C17 when a second room, the parlour was added at the lower end. A straight joint in the South elevation substantiated this development sequence. External masonry also suggests that the attached former granary and dairy at the East end is a subsequent addition, probably late C17. The cellar lean-to was probably added later in late C17-early C18. Bradney states that the Pant was for three generations the home of the Morris family, and that Morgan Morris, rector of Mitchel Troy and Vicar of Wonastow, purchased the property in 1635.



*Photo of the south elevation with the phased development indicated*

- 2.02 The ground floor of the cellar is used as an office and utility area and the intention is to retain these uses but to increase the downstairs w.c to allow a shower to be accommodated. There is already drainage in this area and it is thought that this area was once used as a kitchen.
- 2.03 The first floor of the Parlour section of the building is currently used as a bathroom but does not have a shower or mechanical ventilation which is required.
- 2.04 Within the Cellar is a window which is noted in the listing "Far right is a hipped lean-to of the former cellar which has a late C17early C18 2-light mullion and transom window with leaded upper lights".



*Photo of the north elevation with the late C17 early C18 window*

- 2.05 Within the ground of The Pant is a stone built little barn currently used as annex accommodation to the main dwelling. The building is not listed and is not mentioned in the listing but is important to the setting of the listed building. It was noted that at some point the building has been rebuilt as it is identified on a map of the parish from 1846 but appears to be square on plan. Also, modern damp proof course is visible and ground floor level.



*Photo of the south elevation of the outbuilding*



*Extract of a plan of the Parish of Llantillio Crossenny 1846*

#### **4.00 DESIGN CONCEPT**

- 4.01 The existing building has been relatively well maintained but there are a number of issues which the current owners are looking to address whilst updating and future proofing the property. There was a planning approval for the little barn granted on 1<sup>st</sup> July 1992 ref 34882 the current building is not in accordance with these drawings and this application will aim to regularise the current situation as well as secure approval for the planned alterations.
- 4.02 The principle for the alterations has been agreed and the design of a new arrangements has been prescribed by the following parameters.

- (i) The applicants wish to replace the smoke glazing in the front door with a more appropriate leaded glazing.
- (ii) The need to repair the existing window on in the office of the main house on the North Elevation to prevent water ingress
- (iii) The applicant's requirement for a ground floor shower for visiting elderly relatives and to future proof the property for their own needs. Including mechanical ventilation to prevent moisture from entering the building fabric need to keep the impact of any alterations / additions to the fabric of the building to a minimum.
- (iv) The applicant's requirement for a remodelled first floor bathroom with separate shower and mechanical ventilation to prevent moisture from affecting the building's structure.
- (v) To replace the existing kitchen floor which had to be partially lifted to access a water leak with an appropriate alternative floor finish.
- (vi) The need to formalise the use of the little barn and its current appearance. The barn is a curtilage building and requires listed building consent.
- (vii) Relaying the cobble and a new handrail to allow safer access to the little barn.
- (viii) The requirement to amend the internal layout of the little barn to introduce two first floor bedrooms with a bathroom and ground floor alteration to form a kitchen and utility area with the introduction of a wood burning stove.
- (ix) Introduction of a handrail to the external steps to improve safety.

4.03 At the pre-application consultation stage the principal was agreed but justification and careful consideration would be needed when considering the proposed solutions.

4.04 The front door has two matching leaves each with two arched head glazed panes. The glazing in these panes is a smoked glass and the applicant seeks to replace these panes with clear rectangular panes with lead comes with a size and proportion of glazing to match the existing leaded lights in the adjacent window serving the cellar. The glass will need to be toughened to meet building regulations and the glazing will be undertaken by a specialist such as Brockweir glass.



*Existing front door with smoke glazing*

- 4.05 The window in the Cellar has been stripped of its painted finish and has revealed that the bottom section has been replaced as illustrated in the photographs below. The bottom section of the mullion and casement is softwood and simply had been reused from a modern window. The transom and upper mullion are rotten at the junction and following inspection by a joinery specialist it is confirmed that these will need to be replaced. With, well over 50% of the window not being the original timber it is considered that replacing the window frame with a new oak framed unit with all matching sections would be most appropriate.
- 4.06 The existing leaded lights have failed and needs replacing and the applicant would like to introduce leaded lights in the two lower sections. As illustrated in drawing 2242-02. The existing glass would be reused with new lead comes to match the existing with the lower sections having glass of a similar size and proportion as the upper sections. The works will be undertaken by a specialist with the glazing to be carried out but a specialist such as Brockweir glass



*Scarfed section evident internally*



*Modern casement and mullion in lower quadrant*

- 4.06 Within the cellar there is an oak partition creating a small utility and separate W.C. The applicant would like to increase the size of the W.C to allow the creation of Wet room shower. The siting of the new partition needed careful consideration to avoid obscuring any original timber lintels or beams which are left exposed in the rendered walls.
- 4.07 Keeping the Shower in the same area as the W.C. allows the existing foul water drainage connection to be utilised and avoids the need to form a new opening through the existing wall.
- 4.08 Introducing a shower will increase the moisture in the atmosphere and risks having an impact on the fabric of the builder. Drylining the walls and replacing the modern (sawn) boards on the ceiling with a vapour check plasterboard will reduce this risk. The boarded ceiling in this area is largely not historic boards. Any old boards will be reused to replace the modern board elsewhere within the room.
- 4.09 The floor joists in this area are also modern and are excessively deep in section. This are to be trimmed on to a loadbearing stud partition and over the shower room these are to be reduced in depth to 50 x 100mm Tan s/w joists at 400mm c/c and will be underdrawn with vapour check plasterboard and skim.
- 4.10 The introduction of mechanical extract ventilation has been carefully considered and that the extract should be located over the shower and will discharge through a ventilated slate roof tile in the roof above the cellar. This will be boxed in at first floor as it will pass through a built in cupboard at first floor.



*Inline slate vent in roof of cellar*



- 4.10 At first floor within the parlour section of the main dwelling there is a family bathroom comprising a bath built into a frame work below the window, W.C and sink. The applicant would like to i the room to allow for a separate shower to be introduced. There is no mechanical extraction and there is little sound insulation within the floor structure as the majority of the floor joists are exposed on the ground floor. Upon lifting the carpeted floor finish it was discovered that the floor boards are modern softwood boards.



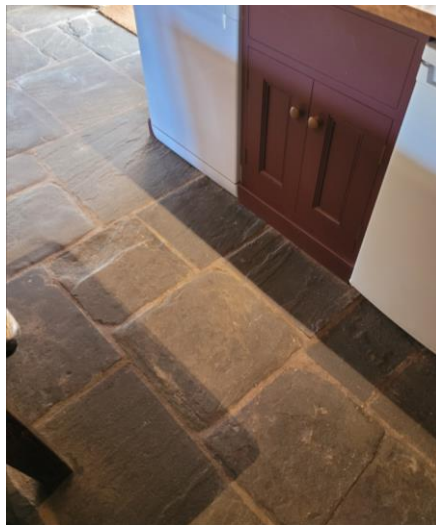
*Softwood floorboard in the bathroom*

- 4.10 To introduce sound insulation it is proposed that a section of the floor is raised to the same level as the section of floor below the w.c. This is approximately 200mm above the existing floor finish. The existing floor boards and joists will remain in situ. Rock wool insulation will be installed between the new joists and above the modern floor boards. The door and will not be affected and raising the floor will allow new drainage runs to connect to the existing soil and vent pipe.
- 4.11 The framed bath is to be replaced with a free standing roll top bath and the existing walls are to be drylined in the shower area with Vapour-check plasterboard with a tiled finish. In areas where the lime rendered walls have been covered with wall paper. The paper is to be removed and the lime plaster repaired as necessary with a lime render to match the existing. The walls will then be painted with a Keim breathable paint finish.
- 4.12 The introduction of Mechanical ventilation has been carefully considered. In order to minimise the impact on the building fabric. In this area there is the opportunity to introduce a vent in the soffit of the dormer. Painted black to match the colour of the painted timber soffit and fascia the vent would be hidden from view.



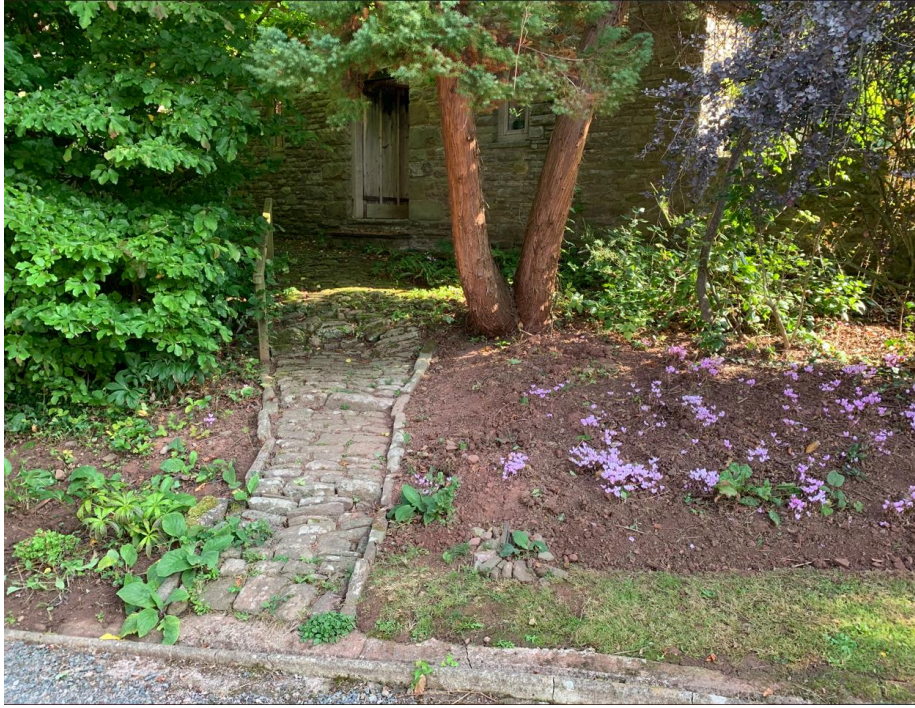
*Image of vent to be installed on soffit*

- 4.13 The kitchen floor has been affected by a burst water pipe and areas of the clay quarry tiles have been lifted in order to find the leak and cut off unused pipework. It has not been possible to source tiles to match the existing which have limited value and the proposal is to replace the existing floor finish with a flagstone floor which would have been more typical in an old Dairy.



*Proposed flagstone floor finish in the kitchen*

- 4.14 The little barn is accessed via an uneven cobbled path which appears to have been partially relayed close to the driveway with kerbs introduced. Closer to the barn the cobbles are more uneven probably affected by tree roots and the boundary of the cobbles is less defined. Selected cobbles will be carefully lifted and re-bedded on lime mortar with steps introduced as necessary to reduce the trip hazard.



*Relayed cobbles adjacent to driveway*



*View of the cobbles from the little barn showing the uneven nature*

The intention is not to lift all the cobbles only those necessary to generally level the surface to improve safety.

- 4.15 Internal alterations within the little barn consist of adjustments to a modern staircase and blockwork partition with the introduction of timber studwork walls at first floor to divide the space in two bedrooms and shower room. A

wood burning stove is to be introduced and the flue will penetrate the roof on the eastern elevation away from the house.

Internally the partition separating the bedrooms is on the line of the truss and 70mm studs will be used with plasterboard and skim on either side which will allow the truss to remain exposed on both sides of the partition. This will prevent this element of the building from being covered.

The external staircase will provide a means of escape in the event of a fire and the introduction of a simple wrought iron handrail will have minimal visual impact but will provide to protection against falling.



*An example of a simple flat handrail to be installed.*

## **5.00 ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPACT OF THE PROPOSALS ON ITS HISTORIC CONTEXT**

- 5.01 Careful consideration of the impact of the proposals on the fabric and setting of The Pant. A “light touch” approach has been adopted trying to utilise existing openings in the historic walls for an alternative drainage layout internally. Where new interventions are necessary for the mechanical extraction the openings have been sited discretely. The proposals will provide accessible washing facilities on the ground floor and will improve ventilation in shower rooms both on ground and the first floor. Works to the little barn will provide annex accommodation to the main dwelling to allow family members to stay.

## **6.00 CONCLUSION**

- 6.01 This HIA has been prepared in support of the planning application for minor alterations at The Pant, Cross Ash Monmouthshire. Its main aim has been to address the concerns raised by the Conservation Officer during the pre-application consultation process. The assessment demonstrates that the applicants have understood the historic context of the property and the potential impact of the new alterations. By adopting a sensitive approach, it has been demonstrated that the improvements will not have an adverse impact on the heritage asset.

