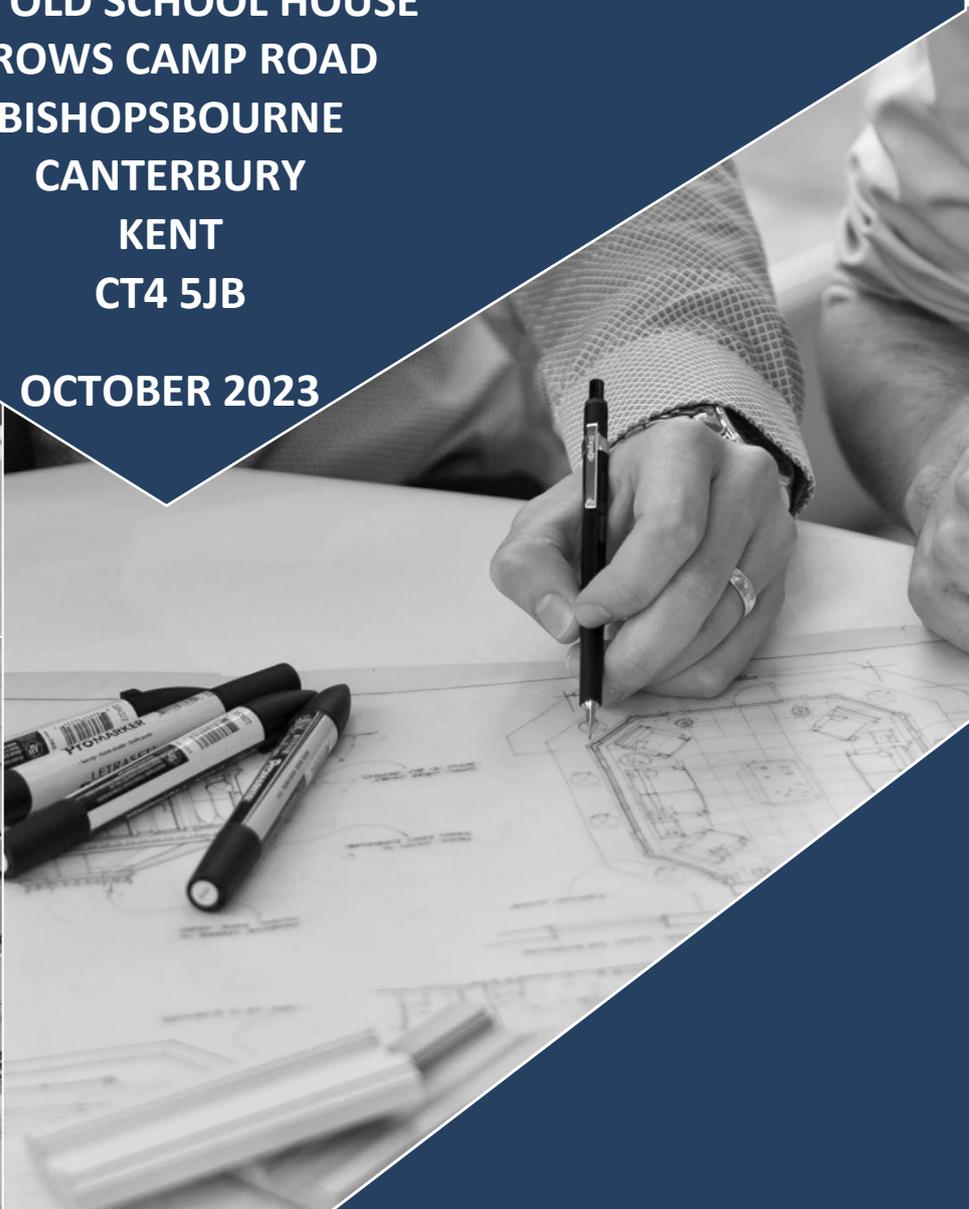


HERITAGE, DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

ADDITION OF A REPLACEMENT BESPOKE GARDEN ROOM TO:

THE OLD SCHOOL HOUSE
CROWS CAMP ROAD
BISHOPSBOURNE
CANTERBURY
KENT
CT4 5JB

OCTOBER 2023



VALE
GARDEN
HOUSES

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Old School House is a grade II listed house located in the Bishopsbourne Conservation Area and the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, within the boundary of the Canterbury City Council. It is our clients' wish to remove their existing conservatory and add a bespoke timber and double-glazed garden room within a similar footprint area.
- 1.2 This report has been prepared to support both a householder planning application and listed building consent following Pre-Application Advice ref: PRE/23/00159 and is set out to provide a brief history of The Old School House and the wider Conservation Area, assessing the key characteristics and how these contribute to the significance of the house and its setting, and then to assess the impact of the proposed development. Against this background, this statement will go on to conclude that the proposed development accords with all material planning considerations and that this justifies the approval of planning permission for this scheme.

2.0 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 2.1 Section 66 of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act provides a statutory duty in respect of Listed Buildings for the decision maker to *"have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses"*.
- 2.2 Section 69 (1)(a) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that *"every local planning authority shall from time to time determine which parts of their area are areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance"*.
- 2.3 Section 72 of the same Act states that in exercise of planning functions "special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area".
- 2.4 Section 38(6) of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that planning applications should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 2.5 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), most recently updated in July 2021, has replaced all previous Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) and Planning Policy Statements (PPS) in respect of the consideration and determination of planning applications. The heart of the NPPF is set out within Paragraph 11, which stresses the presumption in favour of sustainable development. In decision making, this means:
- Approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or
 - Where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are more important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:
 - i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
 - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

- 2.6 Paragraph 8 sets out the three key dimensions to the delivery of sustainable development – economic, social and environmental – and it is stressed that these fundamental roles cannot be undertaken in isolation, owing to their mutual dependency. Therefore, to achieve sustainable development, economic, social and environmental gains should be sought jointly and simultaneously through the planning system.
- 2.7 Paragraph 10 stresses that plans and decisions need to take local circumstances into account, so that they respond to the different opportunities for achieving sustainable development in different areas and to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area.
- 2.8 Section 12 – Achieving well-designed places – This section of the NPPF is applicable to all development proposals, to ensure that high quality buildings and places are created. It is also stressed that “good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.” (Paragraph 126).
- 2.9 Section 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment – This section of the NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. Of particular relevance to this application is paragraph 176; *“great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads. The scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas”*.
- 2.10 Section 16 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment – This section of the NPPF seeks to ensure that heritage assets are appropriately considered to ensure that they are conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.

3.0 LOCAL PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

All new development within the boundary of Canterbury City Council must give consideration to the Canterbury District Local Plan. This document states that the Authority are keen to promote high quality design in order to conserve and enhance the environment, especially in relation to heritage assets. In this case, the following policies are most relevant:

- POLICY DBE3 – Principles of Design
- POLICY DBE6 – Alterations and Extensions
- POLICY HE1 – Historic Environment and Heritage Assets
- POLICY HE4 – Listed Buildings
- POLICY HE5 – Development Affecting and Changes to Listed Buildings
- POLICY HE6 – Conservation Areas
- POLICY HE8 – Heritage Assets in Conservation Areas
- POLICY LB1 – Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

4.0 CONTEXT AND HISTORY OF THE OLD SCHOOL HOUSE AND SURROUNDING AREA

- 4.1 The Old School House is a late 19th century Victorian, grade II listed school building situated in the village of Bishopsbourne, Kent, and lies in the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The application site also falls within the Bishopsbourne Conservation Area, which was designated in 1994 and sits to the south-east side of Crows Camp Road, west of the village centre. The village lies 4 miles south-east of Canterbury.
- 4.2 Constructed of red brick with ashlar dressings and a red tiled roof, The Old School House was built in a Victorian Jacobean architectural style. The date 1871 M F B (Matthew and Fanny Bell, who owned Bourne Park) is present on a gable end. Although the original house dates back to the late C19 there are modern additions to the rear, these include the C21 conservatory which permission is sought to replace.
- 4.3 It is understood that The Old School House was built by Matthew and Fanny Bell of the Bourne Park House estate, a grade I listed Queen Anne style country house which resides just north-west of Bishopsbourne village and the application site and served as a National School for boys and girls. It is believed that the building continued as a school until the early 50's.
- 4.4 Although little is documented about The Old School House, an assessment of photographs and some planning history, establishes that alterations and a two-storey extension (CAL/87/00047 & CA//87/00403) was granted permission in 1987, followed by the approval of a glass conservatory in the same year. This was subsequently replaced by the existing conservatory, standing today, in 2007.
- 4.5 It is to the south elevation that the existing C21 conservatory sits (*fig. 11*), and permission is sought to replace it within a similar footprint with a solid roofed garden room to create a more insulated, usable space. Historic maps and satellite imagery give a good understanding of the evolution of the property as well as establishing a helpful timeline. Satellite imagery from 1990 shows the addition of both eastern and western single storey extensions to the south elevation; the original conservatory was added at this stage, which ties in with the available planning history. It is to this C20 single-storey extension that permission is sought to replace the existing C21 conservatory.
- 4.6 The architectural and historic character of The Old School House was recognized in 1980 when it was added to the statutory list as a grade II listed building as shown in *Appendix A*. An understanding of the evolution of the property can be gained from a combined assessment of surviving historic maps and records as well as a visual appraisal of the building itself.
- 4.7 Unquestionably, The Old School House has a degree of architectural and historical significance as was demonstrated by its initial addition to the statutory list. However, the extent and focus of this significance needs to be further considered in the context of the building as a whole and its environs – especially when considering work to such a building.
- 4.8 It can be fairly summarised that with respect to The Old School House, the principal areas of significance are its statutory listing and its setting and location within the Conservation Area and the wider AONB. This is a clear example of how a building has had, over the years, appropriate development, showing that Old School House can successfully accommodate appropriate and considered change as it continues to evolve.



Fig. 1 – The Old School House; principal elevation facing Crows Camp Road.



Fig. 2 – South facing rear elevation.



Fig. 3 – South-west facing elevation.

5.0 HISTORIC MAPS

- 5.1 At the beginning of the 19th Century, Ordnance Survey began to map and publish their first series of maps for the country on a County-by-County basis. The Old School House was included on a c.1872 map as shown in *fig. 4* below. A clearer identification of The Old School House can be seen in the 1896 and 1938 OS maps (*figs. 5 & 6*). Satellite imagery (*figs. 7-10*) shows satellite imagery of the site from 1960 through to present day today.



Fig. 4 – 1872 OS map of The Old School House.

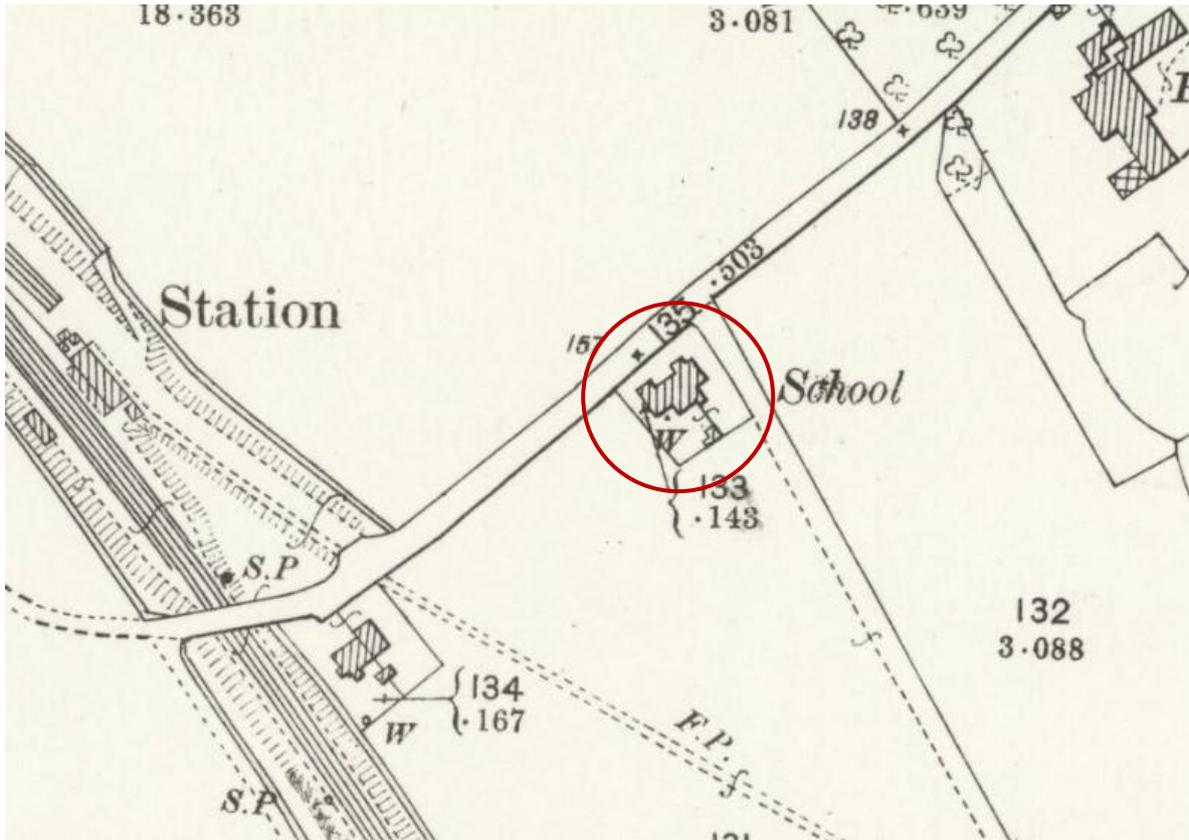


Fig. 5 – 1896 OS map.

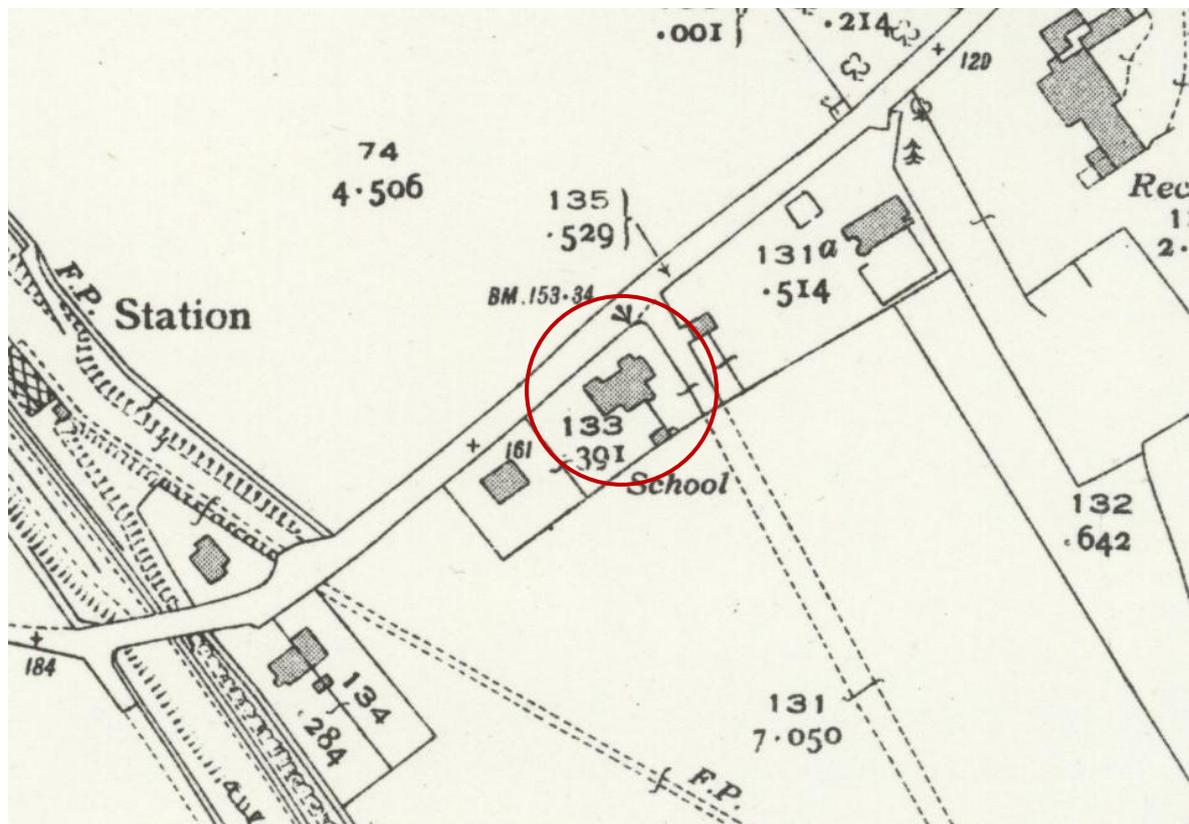


Fig. 6 – 1938 OS map.



Fig. 7 – 1960 satellite imagery (courtesy of Google).



Fig. 8 – 1990 satellite imagery (courtesy of Google).



Fig. 9 – 2008 satellite imagery (courtesy of Google).



Fig. 10 – Site as it stands today (courtesy of Google).

6.0 IMPACT OF PROPOSED GARDEN ROOM

- 6.1 It is proposed to remove the existing conservatory to allow for the addition of a timber and double-glazed garden room within a similar footprint area. The existing C21 structure has noticeably decreased in overall quality since its' erection some years ago. There are several areas of water ingress that have led to rotting within the timber frames and roof which are having a negative impact on the structure and more importantly being detrimental to the preservation of the host building.
- 6.2 The existing conservatory framework is in a poor state of repair making it unviable for any remedial works. The unsatisfactory construction, inadequate glazing specification and outdated thermal properties make the room uncomfortable in the colder months but also, in combination with the large, glazed roof, causes the room to become too hot in the summer.
- 6.3 It is the owner's intention to improve the aesthetical impact on the property and create a new garden room which is more technically advanced with improved thermal efficiency by way of 14mm 'Argon' gas filled cavities in all double-glazed units. Along with a traditional construction tiled roof, this will add significantly to the usability and protection of this part of the property for many years to come and combat light pollution in the wider historic landscape.
- 6.4 Canterbury local planning policy, along with Section 12 of the NPPF, jointly seek to ensure that new development proposals do not have a negative impact on the character of the location or its landscape setting, and in all cases, should deliver a high quality of design. In these respects, the proposal has considered the requirements of these policies to ensure that the proposal will reflect the rich local distinctiveness of the local landscape and character through scale, form, mass, layout, design, materials, and detailing.
- 6.5 The proposal would alter the appearance of a small part of The Old School House however, as a result of its connection to the C20 extension as well as its' considered and sympathetic design, it is felt that the proposal should be seen as an enhancement to the surrounding Conservation Area and one which ultimately enriches the heritage asset; substantially boosting the functionality of the house. Furthermore, the proposal respects the existing layout and site coverage and as such maintains the relationship between it and the parent building.
- 6.6 Within the context of the Conservation Area, The Old School House makes a broadly positive contribution to its character and appearance, and its overall significance. The site is already developed and has an established residential character, with the land accommodating a notable dwelling, which has been altered and extended during the past 30-40 years, and which, therefore, has elements of historic and architectural value, viewed alongside more modern additions.
- 6.7 The proposed garden room will be accessed via an existing single door from the hallway. Areas of high wall will echo the existing layout as will the feature glazed framework; to make the most of the views over the gardens.
- 6.8 Furthermore, the 'traditional' use of materials reflects those that are found on the site and in the area generally. By utilising a similar footprint, external door position and internal openings, this allows for the proposed garden room to sit comfortably against the property with minimal disruption to the heritage asset and associated site levels.

- 6.9 Being contained within an area of the property that houses the existing conservatory and designed to sit positively within the constraints of the plot, the proposal would have no additional visual impact upon the public realm or neighbourhood.
- 6.10 In terms of the impact on the surrounding landscape and ecology, the proposal would not be deemed to have any detrimental impact as it would be located on an area housing an existing conservatory as shown on the submitted plans and photographs that accompany this document. It is noted within the pre-app response that there may be areas of the property suitable for roosting bats. The photographs included within this statement establish that the proposed garden room is attached to a single-storey extension covered by a large flat roof area, and as such not a suitable habitat for roosting bats or other forms of ecology. Furthermore, there is no evidence of bats within that part of the house. With no proposed works impacting or disturbing the main roof, gables or soffits we feel this should negate a requirement for an Ecological Impact Assessment. ***Additional photographs can be provided if required.***



Fig. 11 – South-west facing elevation of existing conservatory to be replaced.



Fig. 12 – East facing / driveway elevation of existing conservatory to be replaced.

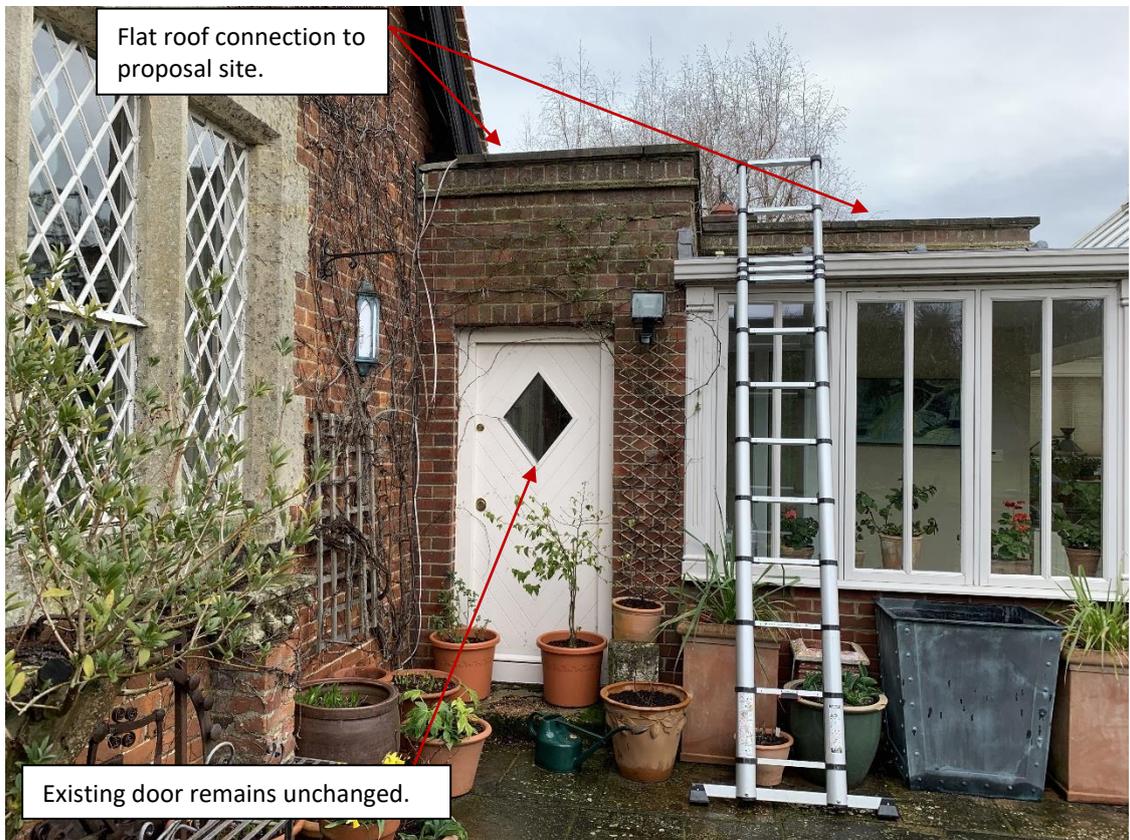


Fig. 13 – View of west elevation showing existing single door.



Fig. 14 – Internal image showing existing single door into the conservatory from hallway.

7.0 DESIGN COMPONENTS

Use

- 7.1 The proposed garden room is designed to be used as a year-round room and will provide the owners with a well-insulated and usable space in which they can enjoy their private gardens.

Scale

- 7.2 The proposed garden room projects 7060mm from the south elevation external utility wall and will be 6280mm wide.

Appearance

- 7.3 The proposed garden room has a traditional, hipped tiled roof with a glazed gable to the south facing elevation. Window casements complement the existing aesthetic. The main structure will be a painted finish and will sit on brick built low walls - this also applies to the high wall elements. Building materials will be sourced to reflect as closely as possible those found on site. Traditional joinery methods are used throughout the construction of the proposed garden room from a combination of Douglas fir and Sapele mahogany all set on hardwood cills.

Access

- 7.4 Vehicular access to The Old School House remains as existing and is unaffected by the proposed works. Pedestrian access into the proposed garden room would be via an existing single door leading from the hallway (*fig. 14*). Access from the garden room to the outside will be via a single door in the west facing framework.

Landscaping

- 7.5 The garden room would be sited on an area that houses an existing conservatory, within the owner's private garden, and would retain the existing site levels, internally and externally. The new footprint utilises part of the existing garden wall, which will require rebuilding in this immediate area to form an insulated cavity wall construction to satisfy building regulation compliance. There are no other proposed changes to the landscaping or levels of the site.

Manufacture and installation

- 7.6 Vale Garden Houses adopt a unique manufacturing approach, in that every project is assembled entirely as a dry-fit in the factory before painting and delivery for Installation. This process ensures great accuracy of fit, and eliminates unnecessary work on site, which in turn minimises stress or damage to the fabric of the host building.

8.0 CONCLUSION

- 8.1 In conclusion, the proposal, which is of high architectural design, has qualities that not only benefit the current occupants but also contribute to the public benefit through its sustainment and enhancement of both the use and significance of the heritage asset. Although the work would amount to some change, this would not harm the overall special interest and character of the building nor the wider Conservation Area or AONB. The Applicant is also keen to enhance the property in order to secure its place for the benefit of future generations.
- 8.2 The main focus for The Applicant is very much about restoring character to the property whilst enabling a level of modern but functional living for their family home, with minimal impact to the existing fabric. It is important to highlight that everything proposed in this application is reversible, if required.
- 8.3 This proposal is intended to conserve and enhance the heritage asset and the surrounding area, taking account of local building traditions and materials. Being single storey; the scale, density, massing, height, landscape, layout and access of the proposal have been considered to ensure that the development blends well with the site and its surroundings, contributing positively to the overall character and quality of The Old School House, Bishopsbourne Conservation Area and the wider AONB.
- 8.4 The design further complements by reflecting the architectural form and character of The Old School House; respecting the existing context, form, and symmetry in both the building and the existing rooflines, which is felt to be a huge improvement aesthetically on the existing structure.
- 8.5 It is considered that the level of impact, when considered in light of the sympathetic design of the proposed garden room, and the general character and appearance of The Old School House, is limited. The changes proposed; by virtue of their scale and the nature of their impact on the heritage asset and the wider Conservation Area and AONB constitute no harm for the purposes of the NPPF and Local Plan Policies.
- 8.6 Lastly, Vale Garden Houses have a reputation for designing and building the finest bespoke conservatories and orangeries. All materials and workmanship throughout the structure will be of the highest quality and it is not intended to compromise with any aspect of the infrastructure or finishes in any way.

Appendix A:

Statutory Listed Building description

Building name: THE OLD SCHOOL HOUSE
District: CANTERBURY (District Authority)
List Entry Number: 1085730

LBS Number: 170990
Grade: II
Date Listed: 14/03/1980
NGR: TR 18697 52429

Listing Text:

1. 5273 BISHOPSBOURNE CROW CAMP ROAD (south-east side)

The Old School House TR 1852 21/137

II

2. Dated on gable end 1871 M K B. Victorian Jacobean style school building in red brick with ashlar dressings and red tile roof. Two gables to main elevation, that to right with one window of 2 lights above one of 4 lights, mullion and transom. The other gable has a longer window of 3 lights. Leaded glazing panes. Round-headed doorway with keystone with cornice below strapwork ornament on plaque, part covered by ivy growth. Bell-cote with monogram. Modern additions to rear.