

**TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990**

**DEMOLITION AND REMOVAL OF THE  
EXISTING, MUCH ALTERED  
CONSERVATORY AT EBLEY HOUSE.  
PROPOSED REBUILD OF  
CONSERVATORY WITH A NEW  
LIGHTWEIGHT STRUCTURE, BASED ON  
THE FORM OF THE ORIGINAL  
CONSERVATORY**

**PLANNING STATEMENT**

**Prepared by**

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**Our Reference: DJD.LPC5739**

**November 2023**

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This Statement is submitted to accompany an application for planning and listed building consent seeking the demolition and removal of the existing, much altered conservatory at Ebley House and proposed rebuild of conservatory with a new lightweight structure, based on the form of the original conservatory at Ebley House, 235 Westward Road, Ebley, Stroud GL5 4SX. Ebley House is a Grade II listed building and lies within the Stroud Industrial Heritage Conservation Area.
- 1.2 This Statement will describe the site and the proposal before addressing the planning policy context. This Statement will then set out the case why planning permission should be granted before concluding with the opinion that the proposal accords with the relevant policies of the Development Plan and will not cause harm to the relevant Heritage Assets identified above.

## **2.0 THE APPLICATION SITE**

- 2.1 Ebley House comprises a Grade II listed Elizabethan Mansion House built in French Gothic style, with bay windows, ornamental gables with lion supporters, and patterned chimneys. It is constructed of Cotswold stone and has had several previous uses including a Childrens Home and is currently the administrative headquarters of the Novalis Trust.
- 2.2 The existing conservatory is attached to the south-west wing of the main building and based on historic maps is thought to have been either an alteration or a later replacement, dating from the 20<sup>th</sup> century, of an earlier 19<sup>th</sup> century conservatory. It is timber framed within which are set single paned glass panels under a tiled roof which is pitched. It sits on a low brick plinth with a concrete screed floor with a laminate covering. It is understood that it has been used as a staff lunchroom, break out space and for storage.

## **3.0 THE APPLICATION PROPOSALS**

- 3.1 It is understood that the existing conservatory is in a poor condition. The existing timber frame is rotting and is currently being supported by props. Additional steelwork has been required to support the roof structure and excessive damp has led to mould growth. Similarly, the existing stone plinth

is deteriorating, and poor insulation requires the space to be continually heated during the winter months.

- 3.2 Due to its poor condition, the Novalis Trust now wish to replace this existing conservatory and replace it with a new conservatory to reflect the original 19<sup>th</sup> century version to be used for conferences and staff training. As part of this reconstruction the original lanterns will be reinstated as will the original roof forms taken from historic photographs comprising curved roofs in places. Furthermore, all historic features of built fabric that can be reused from the existing structural will be incorporated into the new construction. Additionally, the existing dilapidated timber frame will be replaced with a metal supporting structure and existing single pane glazed will be replaced with double glazing where acceptable. A new metal standing seam roof will also replace the existing roof tiles.

#### **4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT**

- 4.1 This planning policy review sets out local and national policy and legislation relevant to the proposals.

##### **The Development Plan**

- 4.2 Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and Section 70 (2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 requires that applications must be in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

- 4.3 The Development Plan for this application comprises the following policy documents: -

The Stroud District Local Plan (adopted November 2015);

- 4.4 The relevant policies of the Stroud Local Plan are set out below: -

Core Policy CP1 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

Core Policy CP4 Placemaking

Core Policy CP14 High quality sustainable development

Delivery Policy ES1 Sustainable Construction

Delivery Policy ES3 Maintaining quality of life within our environmental limits

Delivery Policy ES4 Water resources quality and flood risk

Delivery Policy ES6 Providing for biodiversity and geodiversity

Delivery Policy ES7 Landscape character

Delivery Policy ES10 Valuing our historic environment and assets

Delivery Policy ES12 Better design of places

### **National Planning Policy Framework**

- 4.5 The latest National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in 2023 and is a material consideration for all planning applications in England.
- 4.6 Paragraph 81 of the NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses and other organisations can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. The approach taken should allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future. In my view, the development represents an example of what this central government guidance is seeking to encourage.

## **5.0 THE CASE IN FAVOUR OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT**

- 5.1 Having outlined the relevant planning policy context against which this application should be assessed, it is now necessary to identify the main issues for determination.

These are considered to be as follows: -

*Principle of the development*

*Heritage considerations*

*Design & Amenity considerations*

*Sustainable construction*

*Drainage and Flood Risk*

***Principle of the development***

- 5.2 In terms of the principle of this application, Policy CP1 - Presumption in favour of sustainable development requires that when considering development proposals

the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework.

- 5.3 Similarly, the application site lies within the Stroud Settlement Boundary where policy CP3 - Settlement Hierarchy states that proposals for new development should be located in accordance with the District's settlement hierarchy to reduce the need to travel and promotes sustainable communities based on the services and facilities that are available in each settlement. As mentioned, the site lies in Stroud which is an Accessible Local Service Centres - First Tier. They are the primary focus for growth and development to safeguard and enhance their strategic roles as employment and service centres.
- 5.4 Accordingly, it is considered that the principle of extending an existing building within an office use in this location is acceptable in principle and supported by policies CP1 and CP3 of the Local Plan.

#### ***Heritage considerations***

- 5.5 In this case the host building is Grade II listed and lies within the Industrial Heritage Conservation Area. Accordingly, Delivery policy ES10 is relevant to this application which says that proposals and initiatives will be supported which conserve and, where appropriate, enhance the heritage significance and setting of the Districts heritage assets, especially those elements which contribute to the distinct identity of the District.
- 5.6 At the same time, Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework requires that Local Planning Authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining or enhancing the significance of heritage assets, including their settings. Paragraph 197 states 'In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:
- a) The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation:
  - b) The positive contribution that the conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
  - c) The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness

- 5.7 Paragraph 199 adds that 'When considering the impact of a proposal on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the assets conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance. Paragraph 202 also adds that 'where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposals'.
- 5.8 In response to the above local and national policy requirements, this application is accompanied by a Design and Heritage Statement which describes the history and evolution of the building and the new proposals. In this case, the existing conservatory is thought to represent a 20<sup>th</sup> century alteration or replacement of an original 19<sup>th</sup> century version of better quality. Furthermore, the current conservatory is in a poor condition requiring structural support to the existing timber frame and roof. It is also poorly insulated requiring constant heating during the winter. The new conservatory will not only reinstate the original lanterns and replace the original curved roof forms, but also retain all original features. It will be more traditional in appearance, including a slim metal frame and standing seam roof.
- 5.9 The new conservatory will be located on the footprint of the existing which is located to the southwest of the main Mansion House. It will also follow similar proportions and having regard to the design improvements outlined within the Heritage Statement, and as detailed above, it is considered that the proposals will result in an enhancement to the host listed building and wider Industrial Heritage Conservation Area. The proposals are therefore considered to accord with Local Plan Policy ES10, ES12 and Section 16 of the NPPF.

### ***Design & Amenity considerations***

- 5.10 Policy ES3 of the adopted Stroud Local Plan makes clear that permission will not be granted for any development which would be likely to lead to, or result in an unacceptable level of noise, general disturbance, smell, fumes, loss of daylight, or sunlight, loss of privacy and an overbearing effect. At the same time, Paragraph 130 of the NPPF states that planning decisions should ensure that development

functions well and adds to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development. The paragraph goes on to add that developments must be visually attractive, as a result of good design and appropriate landscaping. Furthermore, paragraph 130 goes on to advise that developments should create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity.

- 5.11 Delivery Policy ES12 says that the District Council will require the layout and design of new development to create well designed, socially integrated, high quality successful places, where people enjoy living and working, with legible and well planned routes, blocks and spaces, integrated residential, commercial and community activity, safe attractive public spaces and pedestrian/cycle routes without traffic conflict, secure private areas, better designed buildings and landscaped spaces.
- 5.12 In respect of these amenity considerations, the proposed conservatory will be set well within the grounds of the existing Mansion House and a considerable distance from any residential property. Consequently, it is not considered that there will be any detrimental effect on residential amenities. At the same time, the new conservatory will be designed with ease of function and accessibility in mind, including level access into the building by raising the floor level to match the Conservatory and ramp up to the doorway. The internal layout will also make a much better use of space providing a more spacious open plan environment for staff compared with the existing arrangement and better use of natural light,

***Sustainable construction***

- 5.13 Delivery Policy ES1 Sustainable Construction and Design is relevant which requires planning applications to consider Maximising energy efficiency and integrating the use of renewable and low carbon energy (i.e. in the form of an energy strategy); Minimisation of waste and maximising the recycling of any waste generated during construction and in operation; Conserving water resources and minimising vulnerability to flooding; Efficiency in materials use, including the type, life cycle and source of materials to be used; Flexibility and adaptability, allowing future modification of use or layout, facilitating future refurbishment and retrofitting; and Consideration of climate change adaptation.

- 5.14 In response to the above policy requirements, the existing conservatory is in a poor state of repair and has very poor insulation, resulting in having to have the heating on continually during the winter months. This is clearly not energy efficient, and the new conservatory will be better insulated and more efficient incorporating double glazing where appropriate. Similarly, the above policy mentions efficiency in the use of materials and this application will reuse all original features and materials as part of the new conservatory. Overall therefore, it is considered that with the incorporation of these measures, the proposals accord with policy ES1.

### ***Drainage and Flood Risk***

- 5.15 The application site lies in Flood Zone 1 and is at very low risk from surface water flooding. The site of the existing conservatory lies on previously developed land and the new replacement will be located on the same footprint, thereby resulting in no increase in impermeable area. Foul and surface water drainage are understood to be discharged into the mains system currently and there are understood to be no changes to this arrangement for the new conservatory.

## **6.0 CONCLUSION**

- 6.1 This planning statement has been submitted in support of a planning and listed building consent application to remove an existing conservatory and replace it with a new conservatory of a lightweight structure based on the form of the original conservatory at Ebley House, 235 Westward Road, Ebley, Stroud GL5 4SX.
- 6.2 In principle, the application sits within the settlement boundary and built up area of Stroud where extensions to existing buildings are acceptable. Furthermore, whilst the host building is Grade II listed and lies within a Conservation Area, it has been demonstrated that the new addition would represent a physical and visual improvement compared with the existing structure which is now in a poor condition and in need of replacement. Other matters including design, amenity, sustainable construction and drainage have also been addressed. Overall therefore, it has been shown that the proposed development accords with the relevant policies of the Stroud Local Plan and other material considerations. This development is not liable for CIL because it is a use that does not fall within the Council's charging schedule.