

# **Design and Access and Heritage Statement**

**Site Location: St Marys Grove Cottage, St Marys  
Grove, Tilmanstone CT14 0JS**

**Proposal: Single Storey Rear Extension**



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## **1 Introduction**

This report will discuss the site and location, details of the proposal and justification, relevant legislation, policies and guidance, identify the significance of any heritage assets, and then evaluate the impact of the proposals on their significance.

The design of the current scheme has been an iterative process, which has been informed by the constraints and opportunities of the site, the needs of the applicant and the national and local policy guidance.

This statement takes into account the advice given by Historic England in their advice note 'Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets' 2019. Additionally it complies with the requirement set out in paragraph 12.7 of the Draft Dover District Local Plan.

## **2 Site and Location**

The site is located on the northern corner of St Marys Grove and North Court Lane, set in large grounds on the edge of the countryside. It is a storey and a half, with accommodation within the roof space; stacks to either end; red brick construction (painted front elevation), with Dutch styled gables, under a Kent peg tile roof. Two modern timber casements on the front elevation with gabled porch to the right hand side and two gabled dormers; contemporary extension to the rear, (see Figs: 1-4).

To the rear is a single storey detached outbuilding, clad in black feather edged weatherboarding, with a brick gable at the northern end, under a Kent peg tiled roof. This is now used as ancillary accommodation for the main building.

The house is Grade 2 listed and falls within the Tilmanstone Conservation Area.



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4

### 3 Planning History

1. 23/00453: Erection of a 2 storey rear extension. Listed building consent granted 8/07/2023.
2. 23/00452: Erection of a 2 storey rear extension. Planning permission granted 28/07/2023.
3. 23/ 00104: Erection of a greenhouse. Planning permission granted 23/03/2023.
4. 06/00430: Replacement windows. Listed building consent granted 22/05/2006.

### 4 Details of the Proposal and Justification

A two storey rear extension has already been approved for this property, see above planning history. During the planning process, the original scheme was reduced in size, at the request of Dover District Council. As a result of this, the approved scheme did not provide any beneficial additional accommodation at first floor level, and as such was not economically viable.

In view of this it is currently proposed to erect a single storey rear extension which would provide a larger lounge/dining area for the family. It would be a simple lean-to extension of brick construction under a slate roof, with two flush fitting conservation roof lights. It would have the same floor area as the previously approved scheme. Additionally, the proposed ground floor elevations would be identical to the ground floor elevations on the approved scheme.

The proposals are justified on the grounds that they would significantly improve the use of the house, making better use of the existing accommodation, without detracting from the historic and architectural significance of the building.

## **5 Relevant Legislation, Policies and Guidance**

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990: Sections 16(2), 66(1), 72(1)

Dover District Local Plan Core Strategy 2010: Policies CP1, DM1

Draft Dover District Local Plan (March 2023)

The submission Draft Local Plan is a material planning consideration in the determination of applications. At submission stage the policies of the draft plan can be afforded some weight, depending on the nature of objections to them and consistency with the NPPF.

Draft policies PM1 (design), HE1 (heritage assets), HE2 (conservation areas)

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF): Paragraphs 8, 11, 126, 130, 134, 194, 195, 197, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203

The National Design Guide 2021

The National Planning Practice Guide

Dover District Heritage Strategy 2013 (updated 2020)

Making Changes to Heritage Assets, 2016: Historic England

The Kent Design Guide (2005)

## **5 Heritage Assets and their Significance**

The proposals would have an impact, to a greater or lesser extent on St Marys Grove Cottage, the Tilmanstone Conservation Area and the wider setting of nearby listed buildings all of which are classed as designated heritage assets in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

The NPPF defines significance as ‘the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from the heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting’. Setting is defined in the Framework as follows:

‘The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.’

It should be noted that paragraph 194 of the NPPF, also states that 'In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by the setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance'.

### **Significance of St Marys Grove Cottage and Outbuilding**

St Marys Grove Cottage is Grade 2 listed and its list description is as follows;

'House. Late C17th. Red brick, in part painted, the gables on side elevations tile hung, with plain tiled roof. One storey and attic on plinth, with shaped gabled roof with stacks at end left and at end right, with two gabled dormers. Two metal casements on ground floor with boarded door to right in gabled porch, with moulded four centred arched outer doorway. Single storey. Contemporary rear wing.'

Note the list description is out of date as the two metal casements referred to have been replaced with timber casements, with the benefit of listed building consent in 2006 (Ref; 06/00430).

As you would expect with a building of this age, there has been a whole arena of changes over the years responding to the aspirations of various owners, and changing fashions of the time. The most significant changes include; the provision of a two story rear extension, creating an 'L' shaped plan form; a single storey rear lean-to extension in the crook of the 'L' shaped plan; extensive internal alterations including the provision of a bathroom at first floor level in front of a chimney breast destroying the original shape of the room; the removal of various chimney breasts and fireplaces, and changes to fenestration. As a result of these changes it is now difficult to identify the original plan form of the building. The significance of this building is now largely a function of its external appearance, patina of age and the use of traditional details and materials, particularly in the front-range with its shaped Dutch gables.

The outbuilding is of early C20 origin and was extended in the latter half of the century, as evidenced by historic maps of the area. It is of timber frame construction, clad in black weatherboarding, with a brick gable at the northern end, under a Kent peg tile roof. It is of no particular historic or architectural significance, but it does nonetheless contribute to the setting of the main house. It is not listed in its own right, but as it pre-dates 1948, and falls within the curtilage of the listed house, it is classed as being curtilage listed and as such listed building consent is required for any alterations to it which affect its character.

### **Significance of the Tilmanstone Conservation Area**

The significance of the Tilmanstone Conservation Area is a function of a number of inter-related factors, (see Figs: 5-8) including;

1. The large number of historic buildings, several of which are listed;
2. Low density development with many buildings set in substantial grounds reflecting its rural location;
3. Generally 2 storey residential development;
4. The interface between the conservation area and the open countryside;
5. The disposition of the buildings in relationship with the highway network and the spaces between and around the buildings;
6. The use of traditional architectural features and materials;
7. The mature landscaping between and around buildings, giving a sylvan appearance;
8. The lack of a formal footpath at the sides of the carriageway contributes to its rural character.

These features give the conservation area a strong cohesive character and are all part of its significance as a designated heritage asset. It should be noted however that although the front elevations have well mannered front facades, the rear elevations have a far more eclectic and organic appearance, as properties have been extended and altered over time, reflecting the changing requirements and aspirations of their successive owners.



Figure 5



Figure 6



Figure 7



Figure 8

## **6 Impact of the Proposals on the Significance of the Designated Heritage Assets**

Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, requires that when considering listed building applications, special regard shall be had to preserving listed buildings and their settings. Similarly section 66(1) of the same Act requires that when considering planning applications which affect a listed building, special regard shall be given to preserving the building. Section 72(1) of the same Act requires that special attention shall be paid to preserving the character and appearance of conservation areas.

The NPPF outlines at paragraphs 199 and 200, that great weight should be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets (this includes both listed buildings and conservation areas) and the more important the asset the greater weight should be given. Any harm or loss of the significance of a designated heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification. The NPPF, at paragraph 195, requires the local planning authority, when assessing an application, to identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal.

Draft policies HE1 and HE2, of the emerging Dover District Local Plan, seek to protect heritage assets and conservation areas, whilst Policy PM1 promotes a high quality of design, and these policies are broadly reflective of the National Planning Policy Framework.

The National Planning Practice Guide, offers more detailed advice on conserving and enhancing the historic environment, and states that 'The conservation of heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance is a core planning principle'. 'Conservation is an active process of maintenance and managing change. It requires a flexible and thoughtful approach to get the best out of assets as diverse as listed buildings in every-day use, to as yet undiscovered, undesignated buried remains of archaeological interest'.

Further national guidance is provided by Historic England in 'Making Changes to Heritage Assets' February 2016. This provides more detailed guidance on alterations to heritage assets, the aim of which is to 'recognise and reinforce the historic significance of places, while accommodating the change necessary to ensure that people can continue to use and enjoy them'.

### **Assessment of the proposals**

The overarching aim of the proposals has been to work with and to respect the special character of the building, retaining as much historic fabric as possible whilst improving the quality and use of the property.

The proposed extension is at the rear of the property, which is the least sensitive part of the building. It would be attached to the existing modern extension and as such would not involve the loss of any important historic fabric, or architectural features.

The extension would cascade down from the first floor, with the top of the lean-to roof springing from underneath the first floor gable window.

The extension would be small in scale and as such would remain subservient to the existing composition. It would be constructed in traditional materials, with brick elevations under a natural slate roof, which would incorporate 2 roof-lights in order to secure sufficient natural light into the existing living room. The design concept has been informed by an existing lean-to extension on the rear elevation, which is also of brick construction, under a slate roof and incorporates a roof-light.

The proposal would be sympathetic to the existing grain of the house, and its cellular floor plan would be retained.

The proposed elevations would be the same as the ground floor elevations of the approved scheme, and as such would be entirely sympathetic to the existing building.

Whilst the extension would have a traditional appearance, it does not seek to copy a particular historic style, and as such would not confuse future interpretation of the building.

As the proposal would be small in scale and have a traditional appearance it is considered that it would not detract from either the character or appearance of the building or from the character and appearance of this part of the conservation area. Indeed it would have less of an impact than the approved 2 storey extension.

## **7 Wider Public Benefits**

The proposed extension would help to give the building its optimal viable use, thus helping to secure its long term future, for the benefit of the wider community.

## **8 Conclusions**

The national and local planning policy context does not prevent all changes to historic buildings but moreover seeks to recognise what is truly significant about a particular heritage asset, whilst at the same time accommodating changes which allow people to continue to use them. This approach is stressed by Historic England in their publication 'Making Changes to Heritage Assets (February 2015). This states that 'An unreasonable, inflexible approach will prevent action that could give a building a new life: indeed it can eliminate that use. A reasonable and proportionate approach to owners' needs is therefore essential'.

The proposal would significantly improve the use and enjoyment of the house, without detracting from its significance as a listed building, or from the setting of any adjacent listed buildings, or from the character or appearance of this part of the conservation area, whilst securing the optimal viable use of the building.



It is therefore considered that the proposed works would meet the requirements of Sections 16(2), 66(1) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990; the requirements of the NPPF in relation to the historic environment and design; Policies PM1 and HE1 of the Draft District Local Plan together with national and local policy guidance on the issues raised by this application.

The Local Planning Authority is therefore invited to support this application which would bring significant benefits to the building without the loss of any historic fabric.

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