

DESIGN STATEMENT

Conversion of Former Masonic Lodge into Dwelling at St Bryde Lodge, St Brydes Road, Kemnay, AB51 5RD

Job Reference: P/122

Date: December 2023



DESIGN STATEMENT – DECEMBER 2023

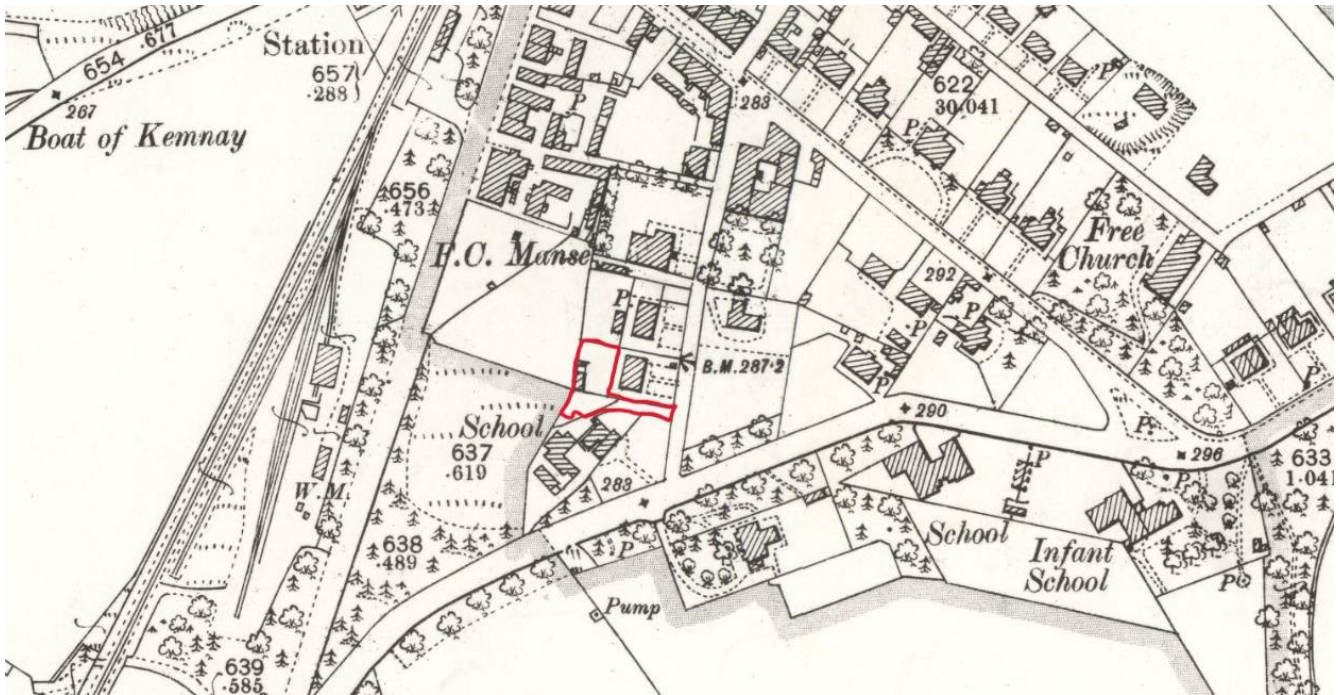
© copyright of this document is the property of Eleanor Alexander Architect Ltd and must not be reproduced either in whole or part without written permission.

1.0 DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL

- 1.1. Full Planning Permission is sought for change of use / conversion of a former Masonic Lodge (Class 10) to residential dwellinghouse (Class 9), including the conversion of the existing outbuilding and erection of a small garden room annex in the private garden space.
- 1.2. The proposed site is situated at St Bryde Lodge, St Brydes Road, Kemnay, AB51 5RD. St Brydes Road is a one-way street accessed off the B993 Grove Road within the settlement boundary of Kemnay. The site lies just outside the designated Town Centre boundary.
- 1.3. The existing buildings and garden area are located in an elevated position at the crest of the hill and the site is accessed via the existing drive and access on St Brydes Road. A very steep embankment is located outwith the site to the west with garage outbuildings at the bottom. Three dwellinghouses are located to the east of the site and one to the south. Again, these dwellings are all at a considerably lower level than the existing building and site due to its location on the hill. There is an approximate 5m change in level between the site and dwellings to the east / south and around 10m difference between the site and garage buildings to the west down the embankment.



- 1.4. The site contains a single storey former Masonic Lodge, which has been vacant for some time. It is not a Designated Listed Building. The existing building was built in 1910, partially on the site of a former school, and consists of a tall rectangular 1 ¾ storey pitched roof building, extending to 2 ¾ storey at the front due to the existing site levels. The additional storey forms a store area below the main ground floor area.



1.5. The existing external finishes consist of coursed pink granite walls and a slate roof and single glazed timber windows which have been boarded up. The gables include attractive granite skew stones, tabling and decorative finials, as well as date stones and Masonic symbols.



1.6. The existing building is generally in good condition externally but has been stripped out back to the stonework internally. All original internal decorative features shown below were superficial false detailing and all windows were framed over. Efforts have been made to retain the existing hardwood floor.



1.7. An existing detached granite single storey pitched corrugated metal roof outbuilding is located to the south of the main building and forms the site boundaries in this location. The front of this building has been boarded up with timber linings. The existing garden area has become overgrown with vegetation and efforts to clear this have commenced. There is a change in level of around 1.5m along the northern garden boundary.



1.8. The site is bounded by 1m to 1.8m high traditional stone walls and a 1.8m high horizontal timber screen fence to the further northern boundary.

1.9. The proposal is to change of use of the vacant building to a dwellinghouse, with internal alterations to form a master bedroom suite by extending the existing 1st floor area into the main hall. A small balcony is proposed from the master bedroom to take advantage of the elevated position and views out over Kemnay and Bennachie beyond. The balcony has been located to ensure it does not overlook any private garden space and is situated at least 17m from the garden area of the dwelling at the bottom of the embankment to the west. Externally, the main existing building would remain largely as existing, with the exception of an additional tall window either side of the existing window in the east gable and lowering the cills of the existing ground floor windows. Black double glazed

slimline Crittall steel windows are proposed to the existing window openings to preserve the original small pane design style. The handrail for the balcony would be in painted steel.



1.10. The existing granite outbuilding is proposed to be converted into a small work from home office / study. Policy P3.2 encourages 'working from home' proposals if they do not cause significant loss of amenity to neighbouring properties through noise, traffic movements or other nuisance, and do

not change the overall character of the property's use as a single dwelling. A new slate pitched roof is proposed and the existing open frontage to be infilled with glazing.

1.11. A small garden room annex is proposed in the garden to provide additional accommodation. It has been located and designed to ensure it respects both the character of the surrounding area and the design/ scale of the existing building and does not significantly reduce the amenity of neighbouring residents. The privacy of the neighbouring properties is not affected as no windows overlook private garden space or windows and there is no adverse overshadowing or a loss of sunlight/daylight to neighbouring sites and properties. It is designed to reflect the simple narrow rectangular form of the existing Lodge with a pitched roof, orientated in the same direction as the Lodge. Its walls and roof are proposed in zinc cladding to provide a suitable contrast with the existing stonework of the building but draw upon the use of metal roof cladding used in the roof to the existing outbuilding.



1.12. The existing buildings are already connected to the public water and sewer network, as well as benefitting from an existing electric connection.

2.0 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES & DISCUSSION

National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4)

Policy 9 Brownfield, vacant and derelict land and empty buildings

Policy 14 Design, quality and place

Policy 16 Quality homes

Policy 18 Infrastructure first

Policy 22 Flood risk and water management

Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2023 (ALDP 2023)

Policy P3 Infill and Householder Developments within Settlements (including home and work proposals)

Policy P1 Layout, Siting and Design Policy P4 Hazardous and Potentially Polluting Developments and Contaminated Land

Policy RD1 Providing Suitable Services

Policy RD2 Developers obligations

2.1 The main planning issues to be considered in this application are the principle of development; the layout and design; the impact on neighbouring amenity; as well as access and servicing of the development. Principle of Development Policy P3 supports development on vacant sites within a settlement boundary that have no specific land use allocation (also known as infill developments), as long as the development respects the scale, density and character of its surroundings, and will not erode the character or amenity of the surrounding area; and there will be no significant interference with the existing or proposed use of neighbouring sites, or the accessibility of future potential development areas.

- 2.2 The building has been vacant for a significantly long period and its proposed use of the building for residential would be compatible with the predominant residential use. Given the mixed uses in the area and mixed house types located nearby, a residential development such as this proposal would not be incompatible with the rest of properties in the area. Moreover, the proposal would not erode the character or amenity of the surrounding area. Therefore, under the terms of the Policy P3 of ALDP 2023 and Policy 9 & 16 of NPF4, the proposed development is considered acceptable in principle.
- 2.3 Layout Siting and Design Policy P1 Layout, siting and design only supports development designs that demonstrate the six qualities of successful places, which includes that it is distinctive; safe and pleasant; welcoming; adaptable; efficient and well connected. The proposal has limited external alterations to the existing building with most of the changes involving interior of the building. The character and appearance of the existing building would be largely retained. The proposal would not lead to any negative impact on the design of the building. The proposed boundary treatment would remain the same as the existing. The proposed site has ample space to contain a dwellinghouse and outbuildings with sufficient garden area, the massing and density of site is considered acceptable to a residential dwelling. The conversions and proposed annex would not significantly alter the neighbouring streetscape and the overall character of the area.
- 2.4 In terms of amenity of the neighbouring properties, the proposed balcony to the rear of the building faces a large steep embankment with garages and other outbuildings at the lower level. It is therefore not anticipated that the proposal would overlook into gardens of the neighbouring residential properties. The balcony has been designed to be easily removed and would not alter the character of the existing building and or have any impact on the amenity of the neighbours. Therefore, it is considered that the proposal complies with Policy P1 of ALDP 2023 and Policy 14 of NPF4 and is acceptable.
- 2.5 In terms of Access and Servicing Policy RD1, the proposals utilise an existing access and drive off a one-way street. Bins can be collected from access to the street and sufficient parking of 2 spaces has been provided within the site. The development would be serviced by the existing connection to public water supply and sewer networks. It is considered that infrastructure provisions for the proposal would be sufficient and the proposal is therefore to the Policy RD1 of the ALDP 2023 and Policy 18 and Policy 22 of NPF4.
- 2.6 The proposed conversion presents no risk of causing significant pollution, creating a significant nuisance, or present an unacceptable danger to the public or the environment. There is no indication of any past use which might have caused contamination. Therefore it is considered that the proposal complies with Policy P4 of ALDP 2023 and Policy 23 of NPF4.

3.0 CONCLUSION

- 3.1 In conclusion, the proposal appears to comply with the relevant policies of the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2023 and Policy 9 Brownfield, vacant and derelict land and empty buildings, Policy 14 Design, quality and place, Policy 16 Quality homes, Policy 18 Infrastructure first, Policy 22 Flood risk and water management, and Policy 23 Health and safety of the NPF4, in that the proposed change of use of the building to form a single dwellinghouse is considered acceptable in terms of principle and layout, siting and design; there would be adequate provisions for foul and surface water drainage, car parking spaces and vehicular access; and it would have no adverse impact on the residential amenity in the surrounding area. It is therefore respectfully requested that the Planning Service support this application.