

**THE OLD RECTORY, ALBURY, SURREY**

**PART CONVERSION, ALTERATIONS AND REPAIRS TO BARN**

**NOTES TO ACCOMPANY AN APPLICATION FOR  
APPLICATION FOR REMOVAL OR VARIATION OF A CONDITION  
FOLLOWING GRANT OF PLANNING PERMISSION**

**Ref: 20/P/01694**

(Town and Country Planning Act 1990, Section 73)

**December 2023**



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## INTRODUCTION

Comprehensive proposals for part-conversion, alterations, and repairs to this timber-framed barn at The Old Rectory, Albury were approved on 03/12/2020 under references 20/P/01694 (Planning Permission) and 20/P/01695 (Listed Building Consent).

These permissions were subsequently amended by further applications 21/N/0115 (Non-Material Amendment) and 21/P/02407 (Listed Building Consent), acceptance and approval received on 20/04/2022 and 24/04/2022, respectively.

Pre-commencement conditions were discharged under applications 21/D/00153 on 01/02/2022 and 21/D/00153/1 on 24/02/2022. Further amendments to the approved conditions were approved under ref. 23/D/00027 dated 21/04/2023.

Building work to implement the approved proposals commenced in 2022 and is now in its final stages. The work has been carried out to a very high standard and has seen the historic timber frame sensitively and successfully repaired. The reinstatement of the historic roof form, and the renewal of the barn's external envelope with high quality traditional materials has transformed its appearance. The building's future has been secured and it now makes a very positive contribution to the setting of the conservation area and the Grade II listed Old Rectory. The photos below illustrate the transformation that has taken place.



*Barn exterior and interior prior to implementation of approved works.*



*Barn exterior following implementation of approved works to reinstate historic roof form and to renew the external finishes using untreated cedar boarding and handmade plain clay tiles.*



*Photographs showing repairs to historic timber framing and installation of new oak-framed roof replacing the low-quality roof from the 1970s post-fire reconstruction.*



*The barn interior with repairs and approved conversion works nearing completion.*

With the works nearing completion, the applicant wishes to make some further amendments to the approved proposals to suit their current requirements. These comprise:

- Various internal layout changes.
- Relocation of existing timber screen from proposed kitchen area to new location.
- New opening between storage bay and adjacent storage area.
- Alterations to storage area.
- Additional window on north-east elevation.

A detailed description and justification of these changes is set out in the following pages.

A further Non-Material Amendment application (ref. 23/N/00110) was submitted for these changes on 17/11/2023 but this was refused for the following reason: *“The proposed amendments would result in the addition of a new window and internal alterations to a curtilage listed building. The insertion of a window into a building which is curtilage listed would materially alter the appearance of the building and as a result would require planning permission and listed building consent. Therefore, the proposed amendments cannot be considered as a non-material amendment.”*

Following this refusal, the case was discussed with Assistant Planning Officer, Holly Craig, who advised that the correct procedure to apply for these amendments would be a Section 73 application to amend the following conditions:

- Condition 2 (Drawing numbers) – To vary the drawing numbers upon which the planning approval is based.
- Condition 6A (External window and door details) – To provide full details for the proposed windows, including the latest amendments so that this condition can be omitted, thereby removing the need for a further discharge of 6A.

The following documents comprise this submission:

- Drawings amended to include proposed amendments:
  - 1022-20-C Ground Floor Plan as Proposed
  - 1022-21-C First Floor Plan as Proposed
  - 1022-22-B Roof Plan as Proposed
  - 1022-23-C Elevations as Proposed
  - 1022-25-B Sections
  - 1022-26-C1 Typical Construction Details
  - 1022-31-C2 Front Entrance Glazing – Sheet 1
  - 1022-32-C1 Front Entrance Glazing – Sheet 2
  - 1022-33-C2 Back Entrance Glazing – Sheet 1
  - 1022-34-C1 Back Entrance Glazing – Sheet 2
  - 1022-35-C2 Typical Window Details
  - 1022-36-C1 Typical External Door Details
  - 1022-41-C4 Window Types
- These notes
- Details of colour and finish for proposed windows.

Changes from the previous application are highlighted on the drawings for clarity.

Please note that the principle of conversion, alternations to the historic fabric, and the details of the proposed repairs and new construction have already been established by the existing consents.

As there is no equivalent minor amendment procedure for Listed Building Consents, we have submitted a full LBC application to amend existing Listed Building Consent ref. 20/P/02407. This is being processed under ref. 23/P/01925, case officer Chris Gent.

## SUMMARY AND JUSTIFICATION OF PROPOSED DESIGN AMENDMENTS

- Internal layout changes

Within the living areas, several changes are proposed.

- The proposed woodburning stove for main living area will be omitted. This is to provide greater flexibility for furniture layouts. The stove is not required as a heat source as underfloor heating is available.
- The additional WC that was to have been located within the approved extension area will be omitted as there was a need to increase the size of the garden store and workshop area that already occupies the rest of the extension. The additional WC was felt to be unnecessary given that two other WCs are being provided for the barn living accommodation. The other WC provision within the extension will remain to provide a facility for the gardeners.
- The proposed kitchen will be relocated into the area previously proposed for use as a ground floor bedroom. This bedroom is no longer required and by relocating the kitchen, the main open plan living area will be less cluttered and have greater flexibility for furniture layouts. The proposed lobby giving access to the omitted bedroom and the stairs will also be omitted. *Note: The existing boarded timber partition in this location will also be relocated, see separate item below.*
- The proposed ground floor bathroom will be reconfigured as a WC and at first floor, the proposed shower room will be reconfigured as an en-suite with access directly from the bedroom. A built-in cupboard will also be created. This is to better suit the current accommodation requirements.

Justification

*The foregoing changes will have no impact on any historic fabric and are concerned only with the omission or reconfiguration of building elements that are already approved for construction under previously applications. There will be no external impact resulting from these changes other than the omission of the roof flue terminal.*

- Relocation of timber screen from proposed kitchen area

As noted above, it is proposed to relocate an existing timber screen in the vicinity of the proposed kitchen area. The screen would be moved in one piece and mounted as a feature on the newly constructed partition wall between the main living space and the storage areas at the south end of the barn.

Justification

*This screen consists of irregular softwood studs clad with wide pine boarding, fixed with skewed nails into the historic bressummer beam above. The absence of mortice holes in the bressummer and the use of softwood confirms that it does not date from the barn's original construction, but is a fragment from a previous internal layout, probably C19th, which has now disappeared. The screen has interest as part of an earlier phase of the barn's development so is considered worthy of preservation but, in its present position, no longer relates well to the current layout. Relocating it would allow the repositioned kitchen to be open to the main living space. Under the previously approved proposals the back of the screen would have been wholly obscured behind a modern partition, while the*

front of it would have been partially obscured by the kitchen. By relocating it as proposed to be mounted on the new dividing wall on grid line C-C1, the timber screen will be preserved as a feature, and it would be possible for it to be returned to its original location in future.



*Left: The timber screen in-situ, as seen from the main living space.*

*Right: The screen temporarily removed to allow for timber repairs and installation of the new floor, with the reverse (boarded) side visible.*



*Left: View towards the proposed kitchen area from the main living space, with the timber screen having been temporarily removed from below the bressummer beam. If approved, its removal would become permanent.*

*Right: The view from the proposed kitchen area towards the main living space, with the timber screen having been temporarily removed for floor installation and repairs.*

- New opening between storage bay and adjacent storage area

The applicant intends to use the storage bay shown on the approved scheme (between grid lines B-B1 and C-C1) as a gym area, as it is a robust space capable of housing exercise equipment, etc. The adjacent part of the barn at its south end (between grid lines A-A1 and B-B1) has a former stable area at ground floor and a loft above. The former stable area has most recently been used as a wood store and is being retained as storage space. This application proposes forming a new opening in the existing timber partition between the storage bay (gym) and the adjacent storage area. This will provide direct access to the storage area from within the building which, at present, can only be reached from a small

external door with limited head height. This will allow more practical use of the storage space, including for additional gym and sports equipment, garden furniture, etc.

#### Justification

*The partition consists of rough softwood studs. On the storage bay (gym) side it is clad in low-grade tongue-and-groove softwood boarding of relatively recent date, and which is incomplete. On the storage area (south) side it is clad a crude mixture of softwood boards of varying thickness, size and shape. These date from its use as a stable and are painted with limewash. The partition has a more substantial oak sole plate, top rail, and centre post, which may be older than the rest of the partition. The proposed new opening would be formed by removing part of two intermediate studs and the boarding over a section approximately 1150mm wide. One side of the opening would be defined by the existing centre post, the other by an existing stud. The sole plate across the threshold of the opening would be remain intact, while the head of the opening would be aligned with an existing boarding joint, approximately 1900mm above the sole plate. The reveals of the newly formed opening would be lined with painted, sawn boarding to match that used elsewhere in the barn refurbishment. The remainder of the existing boarding on the former stable side would be retained and re-coated with limewash. The existing low-grade T+G boarding on the storage bay side would be removed and replaced with new painted sawn boarding to match that used elsewhere. Whilst this alteration would involve some loss of historic material, this would be limited in extent. The material itself is not of intrinsic quality and the retention of most of the partition would ensure that the character and integrity of the partition is maintained. The positioning and detailing of the partition opening have been carefully chosen to relate to the existing construction (e.g. stud positions, board edges) and avoid harm to more significant features such as the centre post and sole plate. As such, we would suggest that the proposed alterations would be justified on grounds of greatly enhancing the practical utility of the storage area with minimal impact on the existing fabric.*



*Views of partition from storage bay (gym) side with proposed opening in red outline.*



*Views from storage area (former stable) with proposed opening in red outline.*

- Alterations to storage area

Within the former stable area, it is proposed to construct a suspended timber floor above the existing brick floor. The existing brick floor is of historic interest and is being retained. However, it is very damp due as it is laid directly on earth. This limits the potential utility of the storage area, even in its most recent use as a woodstore. A suspended timber floor will transform it into a dry space for storing exercise and sports equipment, garden furniture, etc. The void below the new suspended floor will be ventilated through airbricks inserted into the newly reconstructed plinth walls around the barn perimeter. The suspended timber floor will be supported on brick sleeper walls, laid in lime mortar and built directly off the brick stable floor. There will be a step down from the new floor into the adjacent storage bay (gym) area through the proposed new opening. There will also be steps down to access the existing external door.

The side walls of the former stable are clad in rough boarding like that on the main partition and fragments of earlier wall infill materials survive behind this cladding. However, its overall condition is too fragile to continue to serve as the internal wall surface for the storage space. Rather than remove this historic material, it is proposed to build independent timber stud walls to conceal them. The new stud walls will be clad in the same painted, sawn boarding as used elsewhere in the building.

Justification

*The proposed suspended floor and partition walls would be independent of the existing floor and walls, allowing their historic finishes to be preserved behind the new finishes. It would be possible to remove the new finishes in future to return the space to its current condition, with no loss of historic fabric.*



*General views of existing storage area with the side wall cladding visible. These would be retained as existing, but concealed behind newly built independent studwork walls clad in painted sawn boarding. The existing brick floor would be retained below a new suspended floor with a ventilated void to allow the brick surface to 'breathe'.*

- Additional window on North-East elevation

During the construction process of the approved scheme, the Building Control consultant identified a need for the first-floor bedroom to have a secondary means of fire escape via a window. As approved, the bedroom did not have a suitable window, instead having only a rooflight, plus an internal window to the main living space. It has therefore been necessary to provide an additional window on the northwest elevation sized and positioned to comply with the Building Regulations requirements. The change has already been implemented because the issue was identified at a point where the production of windows was at an advanced stage.

Justification

*There has been no impact on any historic fabric resulting from this change. The impact on the outward appearance of the building is considered minimal. The northwest elevation is the least visible side of the barn and faces away from the public realm. The proposed window is small and located close under the eaves. Its square shape, plain details, and irregular placement is consistent with the general fenestration pattern of the barn. This is characterised by small openings, placed in positions determined by internal requirements, rather as an ordered architectural composition. This design approach is intended to preserve the agricultural character of the barn and avoid it becoming overly domestic in appearance.*



*Left: View showing the additional window in place.*

*Right: View from the road, with the northwest elevation to the left side of the barn.*