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Our ref: E895.C1.Let05
February 2024

Dear Sir/Madam

HOUSEHOLDER PLANNING AND LISTED BUILDING CONSENT APPLICATION FOR ALTERATIONS AND IMPROVEMENT WORKS TO THE OLD RECTORY, DRINKSTONE

Introduction and Summary

This householder planning and listed building consent application is submitted on behalf of Mr and Mrs Hill, residents of the Old Rectory in Drinkstone. This application is submitted as part of wider renovation, improvement and extension works to the Old Rectory and its outbuildings which is a grade II* listed building. This application is focused primarily on converting the basement into habitable space and resolving the ongoing damp and water ingress issues which have been identified across the building.

Extensive pre-application discussions relating to wider renovation works to this historic property were undertaken with the Local Planning Authority (LPA) and Historic England between December 2022 and January 2023. This pre-application consultation included an assessment of a proposal to install a Type-C drained tanking system throughout several areas of the basement. The feedback received from Historic England in particular, was that the use of tanking was not initially supported and further investigation on the source of water ingress and dampness was requested to be undertaken. Following this advice, further investigation has been undertaken by Hutton + Rostrom, Historic Building Surveyors, who have extensive experience assessing dampness and water ingress within historic buildings.

A report from Hutton + Rostrom has been submitted with this application. This identifies that faulty drainage features across the property have caused damp and water ingress into the property which have been extenuated by landscaping issues and inadequate ventilation, especially in the basement.

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Based on the findings of this report, and following the recommendations of Hutton + Rostron a new proposal for the basement and drainage system of the Old Rectory has been designed. This seeks permission from the local authority for a revised drainage system which will have the capacity to efficiently direct rainwater away from the house, proposes new, breathable wall and floor coverings and new ventilation into the basement which will seek to address the damp and water ingress issues identified.

Further pre-application consultation has been undertaken with Historic England Inspector of Historic Buildings and Areas, David Eve, between December 2023 and January 2024. Mr Eve confirmed that Historic England does not oppose the proposals. This feedback can be seen in Appendix 1 of this letter.

Property Location and Condition

The Old Rectory is in the village of Drinkstone in Mid Suffolk. It is a Grade II* listed Georgian property with a mid-nineteenth-century service wing on the northern side.

The property is set back from The Street with a gravel drive which approaches the house from the west and is set in a prominent elevated position above the road. Planning Permission (DC/23/01136) and Listed Building Consent (DC/23/01137) were granted in August 2023 for the extension to this property, erection of an outbuilding and cart lodge and further alterations to the property. Further consent has been granted under application reference DC/23/04194 for the conversion of the barn/outbuilding in the grounds of the Old Rectory into a studio/home office.

The basement of the Old Rectory was partially converted into a games room with approval for 'tanking' in 2016 which has been partially undertaken. Surveys undertaken by Hutton + Rostron have identified faulty drainage features across the property which have caused dampness and water ingress into the building which has been heightened by landscaping issues and inadequate ventilation especially affecting the basement.

Proposals

This application proposes changes to the property which seek to resolve the water ingress and damp issues identified as well as improvement works to the basement which will make this a habitable space.

The proposed changes are shown on the submitted plans and are listed in the Design Statement prepared by Soup Architects and submitted with this application. These are briefly listed as follows;

Creation of a new drainage system across the property including installing downpipes and gutters with sufficient capacity, French Drains to the east and south elevations with gullies discharging to new soakaways around the property.

Alterations to the light wells to create effective drainage channels and chutes to allow water to escape.

Installation of a breathable limecrete floor with UFH and tile finish to sections of the basement.

Removal of existing drylining, paint, render/tanking slurry in the basement and areas of exposed brickwork to be limewashed or plastered with lime-based render.

Installation of a mechanical ventilation system in the basement.

Removal of partition walls in the basement and support provided by new joists to existing downstand beams.

Installation of new windows to match the existing.

Installation of WC and partitions to create stores

The changes detailed seek to resolve the damp issues by addressing the areas identified as causing water ingress externally, removing previously applied render and tanking which is trapping moisture in the building fabric, and increasing passive and mechanical ventilation around the basement. It is hoped this will result in the basement becoming a suitable environment to be used as a living space.

The changes proposed will benefit the building by taking a holistic approach to remedy the damp issues which are causing damage to the building fabric. The materials proposed to be used are traditional and breathable materials which will aesthetically benefit the building as well as resolve the underlying moisture problems. The proposals have been designed to retain and protect the building while resolving the identified defects and providing a viable long-term use for the property basement which justifies the level of improvement work required.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) puts great emphasis in Chapter 16 on conserving the historic environment. For proposals affecting heritage assets Paragraph 197 states that account should be taken for the “desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of a heritage asset and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation.” This proposal specifically seeks to create a viable long-term use for the basement of the Old Rectory which will help to ensure its short-term repair work which will enable its long-term conservation.

Conclusion

This application seeks planning and listed building consent for a range of changes to The Old Rectory which seek to address and resolve ongoing damp and water ingress issues, as well as underlying ventilation issues which are causing damage to the fabric of this historic building and make the basement unusable.

The proposed changes seek to address the identified damp issues holistically by solving identified problems with the existing drainage system, removing previous tanking and render which are trapping moisture, as well as creating a new ventilation system. Exposed brickwork will be painted with breathable limewash and if areas need to be plastered, this will be with a traditional, breathable limewash render. This will create a suitable living environment for the basement to be used as habitable rooms. This work will benefit the property by resolving longstanding damp and water ingress issues and will provide a long-term use for the basement which will ensure it is maintained in the long term.

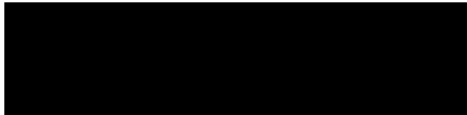
We enclose the following documents with this pre-application request:

1. Planning Application Forms
2. This Covering Letter – Ref E895.C1.Let05;
3. Heritage Statement – Ref E895.C1.Rep03;
4. Masonry Damp Investigation Report – Ref 157-85 Rev A;
5. Soup Architects Design Statement;
6. Existing Site Plan 417_010_S01;
7. Existing Basement Plan 417_090_S01;
8. Existing Ground Floor Plan 417_100_S01;
9. Existing First Floor plan 417_110_S01;
10. Existing Section Through Basement 417_250_S01;
11. Existing West Elevation Front 417_300_S01;
12. Existing North Elevation 417_310_S01;
13. Existing East Elevation 417_320_S01;
14. Existing South Elevation 417_330_S01;
15. Proposed Site Plan 417_010_PL00;
16. Proposed Below Ground Services 417_061_PL02;
17. Proposed Basement Plan 417_090_PL02;
18. Proposed Ground Floor Plan 417_100_PL02;
19. Proposed First Floor Plan 417_100_PL02;
20. Proposed Section Through Basement 417_250_PL02;
21. Proposed West Elevation Front 417_300_PL02;
22. Proposed North Elevation 417_310_PL02;
23. Proposed East Elevation 417_325_PL00; and

24. Proposed South Elevation 417_330_PL02

We trust that this is sufficient for you to progress with this pre-application advice request and we will be in touch when an officer has been allocated.

Yours sincerely



SAM STONEHOUSE
SENIOR PLANNER
EVOLUTION TOWN PLANNING LTD

Appendix A: Historic England Advice Letter – Ref
PA01200119