

Our Ref: ST/210136/P3

11 March 2024

Test Valley Borough Council
Planning and Building Service
Beech Hurst
Weyhill Road
Andover
Hampshire
SP10 3AJ



BY PLANNING PORTAL

Dear Sirs,

Town & Country Planning Act 1990

Proposal: Conversion and urgent repair of the Bothy and Coach House into annexe accommodation to serve Bec House. Urgent repairs to existing stables. Extension of stable roof to create carport. Erection of replacement entrance gates.

At: Bec House, Monxton Road, Amport, Hampshire SP11 8AH
PP-12830496

Fowler Architecture & Planning Ltd have been instructed by Mr & Mrs N Brown to submit a Full Planning & Listed Building Consent Application to Test Valley Borough Council for the above development at Bec House. The application has been submitted via the Planning Portal and comprises:

- Completed application form and certificates;
- Planning application fee [REDACTED]
- Drawing No.210136-01: Site Location Plan;
- Drawing No.210136-50: Existing Site Plan;
- Drawing No.210136-55: Proposed Site Plan;
- Drawing No.210136-151: Proposed Ground Floor Plans;
- Drawing No.210136-152: Proposed First Floor Plans;
- Drawing No.210136-153: Proposed Elevations (1 of 2);
- Drawing No.210136-154: Proposed Elevations (2 of 2);
- Drawing No.210136-155: Proposed Section;
- Drawing No.210136-156: Condition Appraisal;
- Drawing No.210136-080: Existing Plans;
- Drawing No.16477-EL2: Existing Elevations;
- Drawing No.16477-TP1-200: Topographical Survey;
- Bat Survey Report by Plan Ecology;
- Structural Condition Report by Nigel Challis Ltd;
- Heritage Statement by Ridgeway Heritage Consultancy; and

CIL Form 1: Additional Information.

1. Site and Surroundings

The Proposal Site (the 'Site') is located within the village of Monxton, Hampshire. The site extends to 0.7ha is around 3 miles west of Andover.

The site is located relatively central within the village, and comprises the existing residential dwelling of Bec House, existing stables, outbuildings and established residential garden curtilage.

The existing outbuildings (to which this application related) are located to the north of the site, along the boundary between Monxton Road.

Bec House is Grade II listed, designated on the 30th April 1985. The stables and coach house to the north of Bec House are also Grade II listed, designated on the same date as the main house in April 1985. The Historic England list entry for the stables and coach house is as follows:

'Stables and coach-house. Early C19. Cob and brick, thatch and slate. Older central block with a hipped thatch roof, with eyebrows to hayloft doors. Walls rendered on cob and brick: carriage entrance, and stable door. At each end there extends a lower stable block, with a hipped slate roof, brick walls on a flint base (part-rendered). The whole forms an L-shaped building enclosing the rear courtyard of the house, without features along the roadside and the entrance to the site'.

The site is bound by residential development to the north and east of the site. To the west of the site lies St Mary's Church. Monxton and Amport Village Hall lies to the south. Monxton Road bounds the site to the north and east of the site.

The site is currently accessed via a private access driveway to the north of the site.

The site is located within fluvial flood zone 1, with low risk of flooding. The site is not bound by any other local or national designations.

Photographs of the outbuildings are included at Appendix A to show the current nature of the buildings.

2. Planning History

A pre-application enquiry was submitted to Test Valley Borough Council in October 2023 relating to the refurbishment and part demolition of outbuildings to form access to parking & guest accommodation (23/02797/PREAPN).

To summarise the Council's response:

'To summarise, the proposal would likely comply with LHW4, E5, and T2, however there is insufficient details to confirm if the proposal would be acceptable in line with Policy E1 and there are concerns that the proposal would result in harm to the heritage assets contrary to Policy E9. The harm caused to the heritage assets needs to be sufficiently justified, the structural repairs and interventions need to be clearly demonstrated, including detailed drawings and explanation as to why there are no alternative options'.

Following receipt of the pre-application enquiry, the proposed scheme has changed slightly due to updated client requirements, and the fast-paced deterioration of the outbuildings. The proposed scheme is discussed fully in section 3 below.

3. Proposed Development

The proposed development is for the 'Conversion and urgent repair of the Bothy and Coach House into annexe accommodation to serve Bec House. Urgent repairs to existing stables. Extension of stable roof to create carport. Erection of replacement entrance gates'.

The Bothy, Coach House and Stables are fast deteriorating, following the recent bad weather and the aging nature of the buildings. Since August 2022, the buildings are rapidly cracking, bowing and starting to collapse.

The proposed development comprises the urgent repair of the Bothy, Coach House and Stables, along with the conversion of the Bothy and Coach House to annexe accommodation to serve the existing dwelling of Bec House.

It is also proposed to extend the stables roof to create a carport and to fully enclose the courtyard to the north of Bec House. The proposed roof extension will also provide much needed support for the stable building.

In addition, it is proposed to replace the existing entrance gates with new electric timber gates, set slightly further forward than the existing gates, whilst still maintaining sufficient space to cars to enter the site, off the highway, while waiting for the gates to open.

The full scope of works and the condition of the existing buildings are noted on the accompanying plans, and summarised below:

Site:

Removal of existing entrance gates, and formation of new electric timber access gates (shown on drawing no.210136-154);

New post and rail fence between new entrance gates and western site boundary;
and

New pedestrian access gate between Bothy and Bec House.

Bothy:

Conversion of existing Bothy into 1 no. bedroom with associated ensuite;

The existing oven is proposed to be retained and restored as a feature within the room;

The curved wall of the proposed ensuite takes inspiration from the curved wall of the oven, with a pocket door to utilise space;

Urgent repairs to structure of Bothy due to cracking – please see structural report for more information;

Slate roof to be repaired where required – new slates to match existing;

New timber entrance door within existing opening;

Internal fibreboard insulation installed to follow and match the unique character of the wall, with required damp proofing and lime plaster.

Coach House:

Conversion of Coach House into self-contained 1-bedroom annexe – comprising kitchen/dining/living to the ground floor, and 1 no. bedroom and bathroom to the first floor;

Existing timber partition to be retained and repaired;

New spiral staircase to be installed to allow access to first floor;

Internal insulation to match unique character of the wall, with required damp proofing and lime plaster;

1 no. new dormer windows to FF to match existing;

New casement window in existing dormer window opening;

New Crittall windows doors and sidelights to existing opening

New timber entrance door within existing opening;

Urgent repairs to existing cob walls, with materials to match existing;

Urgent repairs to existing roof structure – roof timbers to be assessed and where possible timbers to be maintained, repaired and treated. Any damaged timbers to be replaced using traditional joinery methods where necessary; and

Urgent repairs to existing thatch – to be repaired and renewed. Thatching will be carried out using traditional layering techniques to achieve proper water shedding and insulation.

Stables:

Existing roadside cob wall to be repaired using traditional methods;

Existing roadside brick wall to be repaired using traditional methods;

Urgent repairs to roof. The existing roof structure has failed, with the undulating roof-line being indicative of the structural condition of the roof timbers – please see structural reports. Proposed repairs and rebuilding of roof structure using traditional methods where necessary. Existing timbers and slates to be retained, treated, and reused where possible. New slates (where required) to match existing;

Proposed extension of stables roof to enclose courtyard. Proposed slate tiles to match existing with new oak posts on staddle stones. The new roof will be built off primary timbers from the repaired stables roof. Existing stables hip to be retained and exposed as a feature of the new roof extension.

It has been confirmed by both the structural engineer and heritage consultant that if urgent repairs are not carried out to the buildings as soon as possible, they risk impending collapse which has only been exasperated by the recent weather. Heras fencing is to be erected

around the buildings to secure the site and provide safety to the applicants. Temporary propping has been erected in the stables to avoid roof collapse.

The existing buildings extend to 133.3sqm. The proposed conversion and the formation of a carport results in a total area of 145.5sqm – a net increase of 12.2sqm (GIA).

4. Planning Policy

Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) states that in dealing with an application for planning permission the LPA shall have regard to the provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application; any local finance considerations, so far as material to the application; and any other material considerations. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that, if regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

For the purpose of this application, the development plan comprises the Test Valley Borough Council Revised Local Plan 2011-2029 (LP) adopted 27 January 2016.

The Government's policies are within the revised National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) published December 2023 that describes how the planning system should achieve sustainable development and when the presumption in favour of sustainable development is engaged, The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) provides further interpretation of the policies of the Framework.

5. Planning Analysis

Principle of Development

Monton is defined as a 'Rural Village' in the Settlement Hierarchy. COM2 of the LP states that within the boundaries of the settlements identified in the hierarchy, the principle of development and redevelopment will be permitted if it is appropriate to the other policies of the plan.

The proposed development comprises the urgent repairs to the existing Bothy, Coach House and Stables, as they are at risk of collapse due to rapid deterioration. It is proposed to convert the Bothy and Coach house into annexe accommodation to serve Bec House, along with the creation of a carport which encloses the courtyard.

It is considered that the overall principle of development is acceptable.

Character and Appearance

In terms of design, policy E1 states: 'development will be permitted if it is of a high quality in terms of design and local distinctiveness. Development should integrate, respect and complement the character of the area in which the development is located in terms of layout, appearance, scale, materials and building styles'.

In terms of character, appearance and design – there are minimal changes proposed to the existing elevations of the outbuildings. The exterior of the building will be repaired with new materials where appropriate (using traditional methods) and new glazing is proposed to the south-east elevation.

The Bothy is proposed to be utilised as 1 no. bedroom – retaining the existing historic features of this room. The existing oven is proposed to be repaired and retained as a feature within the space. An ensuite is proposed within the building, being designed with a curved wall to mimic the historic oven to avoid any harsh division of the room.

The previously proposed vehicular opening within the Coach House has now been removed from the proposals, with the space instead utilised as annexe accommodating – ensuring the existing historic features of the space are retained. One new dormer window is proposed to the south-east elevation to match the existing dormer and provide natural daylight to the first floor.

In terms of the stables, in the pre-app response for 23/02797/PREAPN the conservation officer advised that repairs to the building would be supported if there was a clear and detailed report setting out exactly what the issues are, and showed that the proposed repair works was the minimum necessary.

It is considered that the stables roof is in urgent need of repairs. The roof is currently being propped by temporary supports to prevent it collapsing. As much of the existing roof structure will be retained and reused where possible, with new material to match where absolutely necessary. The roof will be repaired using traditional historic construction methods to ensure it is sensitively done.

The proposed carport will allow the existing courtyard to be fully enclosed, which is a common feature with listed buildings.

The new timber electric gates are low-key and considered an acceptable replacement.

Structural

A Structural Inspection Report has been undertaken by Nigel Challis Structural Engineer to advise on the existing nature of the buildings and what repairs are required.

The engineer advises that parts of the structure of the buildings are currently moving and if stabilisation is not carried out very soon, local wall collapse is highly likely to occur.

The report outlines the existing dilapidated nature of the buildings, and provides the following recommendations:

Bothy:

The roof above the Bothy will require localised strengthening to the timber cross frame, such that the existing rafters and purlins are properly supported, and no further roof spread takes place.

Coach House:

Prior to the conversion works, several areas of the building will require structural stabilisation;

These works primarily relate to the stabilisation of the roof structure to avoid any outward thrusts on the walls at eaves level;

A strengthened roof structure of rafters, purlins and frames to span between the walls and laterally restrain them is required – involving support to a new first floor of the Coach House;

The existing original roof structure rafters of the Coach House can be retained and augmented with additional structure to tie the roof structure in and stabilise it;

Subject to the above works, there is no objection to the utilisation of the first-floor level and accommodation being introduced.

Stables:

The adjacent Stable block roof will require repair to ensure that the structure is stable and the roadside wall made safe;

The roof requires new rafters to be paired alongside the existing re-aligned rafters and new timber ties to be introduced. This would allow the roof slate covering to be repaired and a gutter introduced to take rainwater away from foundations;

The whole existing ground floor will require to be levelled and brought up to a reasonable level of thermal performance and moisture resistance by overlaying with insulation and tanking.

Overall, the existing buildings are capable of conversion, provided the above recommendations are carried out and the buildings stabilised as soon as possible. The existing buildings can be repaired locally, retaining as much of the existing fabric as possible.

Heritage

In terms of heritage, Policy E9 states ‘development and/or works affecting a heritage asset will be permitted provided that (a) it would make a positive contribution to sustaining or enhancing the significance of the heritage asset taking account of its character, appearance and setting; and (b) the significance of the heritage asset has informed the proposal through an assessment proportionate to its importance’.

A Heritage Statement has been undertaken by Ridgeway Heritage in support of this application.

The three outbuildings all display evidence of very long-term disuse, with advanced structural deterioration. The proposed scheme of repair and conversion would therefore offer a valuable opportunity for the conservation and sustainable reuse of these structures which would forestall further deterioration and loss of significance. The central Coach House is of interesting vernacular form and earlier date, and therefore comprises the most significant of the three component structures. The residential conversion of parts of this building would entail some limited change internal plan-form and fittings, but would result in little change to their overall form and character.

In their current condition, the buildings do not contribute positively to the appearance of the conservation area, or to the setting of the surrounding heritage assets. The proposed scheme of repair and conversion would secure the long-term sustainable use and significance of historic buildings, which are otherwise in imminent danger of collapse.

The proposed and re-purposing of these buildings would avert the possibility of further deterioration, and would actively enhance the settings of both Bec House and neighbouring heritage assets to the north

The proposed conversion of the outbuildings at Bec House would result in a level of harm which is assessed as being within the low range of less than substantial, although such harm would be decisively outweighed by the heritage benefits of the scheme, which would secure the long-term structural stability and sustainable reuse of these buildings, and preserves a number of significant historic features.

Access & Parking

The existing parking arrangements for the site will remain, with sufficient parking and turning space in accordance with Policy T2.

There are no changes to the existing site access.

The proposed replacement entrance gates are wholly suitable for the nature of the site, and allow added security for the applicants. There is sufficient space to the front of the new access gates for cars to pull into the site, off the public highway, to allow the electric gates to open.

Biodiversity

Policy E5 of the LP advises that development will be permitted where it conserves, restores and enhances biodiversity.

An internal and external inspection of bats and bat roosting potential has been undertaken by Plan Ecology Ltd in respect of the outbuildings at Bec House. No bat droppings or other evidence of bats was found during the surveys. No bats were noted to emerge from the buildings during the emergence surveys. In addition, no evidence of roosting bats were found during the surveys.

It is recommended that works only take place in the daytime to avoid any light or noise disturbance to bats or birds which may be nesting or foraging nearby.

It is considered that the conversion would enhance the setting of the adjacent Grade II listed dwelling and achieve tangible heritage benefits through the repair and reuse of these listed buildings.

The site is well screened from neighbouring dwellings and the surrounding locality by mature vegetation, leading to no or minimal visibility into the site. The application site is large enough to accommodate the proposed conversion, allowing continued use of the private amenity space for the current occupiers. The proposed development will not affect the neighbours through overlooking, loss of privacy or overbearing nature.

6. Conclusion

Overall, the Applicant contends that, due to the location of the existing outbuildings, coupled with the sympathetic nature of the conversion, the proposed development can be successfully integrated into the site.

The existing buildings are in urgent need of repair – confirmed by the structural engineer and heritage consultant – and without these repairs the buildings are at high risk of collapse. The proposed repair works are considered to be sensitive and wholly necessary for the longevity of these historic buildings.

Consequently, the scheme represents high quality design in-keeping with the character and appearance of the locality. The proposed works are minor in nature and subservient to the existing dwellinghouse. As such the proposed development is in accordance with Policy COM2, E1, E5, E9, LHW4 and T2 of the Revised Local Plan.

I trust that the enclosed information is sufficient for this application to be registered at the earliest opportunity. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require any additional information.

Yours faithfully,



FOWLER ARCHITECTURE AND PLANNING

Encs

cc: Clients

Appendix A: Site Photographs (26 February 2024)



