

THE SWAN, FITTLEWORTH, RH20 1EN

HERITAGE AND D & A STATEMENT TO ACCOMPANY A PLANNING AND LISTED BUILDING APPLICATION FOR A ROOF STRUCTURE OVER THE RECENTLY APPROVED EXTERNAL STEPS

1. Introduction

1.1 Planning and Listed building consent has been granted for various works at the Swan, including the construction of a short flight of external steps in the courtyard – SDNP/23/0208/FUL & SDNP/23/02029/LIS.

1.2 This application seeks approval to construct a lead clad roof over the steps to provide covered access for staff passing between the kitchens and the Barn.

2. The Proposal

2.1 The proposal is to construct a lead clad roof supported on 6 slender 90 x 90mm circular steel posts. The roof will link the recently approved kitchen extension to the barn so that staff can travel between the two areas in all weather, see Photograph No 1.



Photograph No 1- the site for the proposed zinc roof outlined in red. The grey roofed building has permission to be demolished under SDNP/23/0208/Ful & SDNP/23/02029/LIS.

2.2 The highest part of the roof is only 300mm above the existing timber trellis which forms the boundary with the adjoining property (Lower Street House) and is lower than the roof of the existing large outbuilding, see Photograph No 2.



Top of existing outbuilding to be demolished

Existing trellis which will be replaced with a higher timber trellis

Photograph No 2 – view of the boundary wall from the adjoining property (Lower Street House) showing the existing timber trellis on top of the boundary wall which will be replaced with a higher trellis. The proposed lead roof will be obscured from view from Lower Street House by the new trellis.

2.3 The existing trellis will be replaced with a new timber screen which will extend beyond the top of the proposed roof structure.

3. Planning History

3.1 Planning approval and Listed Building Consent has been granted for alterations and extensions at the Swan Inn, references SDNP/23/0208/Ful & SDNP/23/02029/LIS.

3.2 Applications were made on 22nd November 2023 for a similar roof structure to that included in the current applications, to be clad in zinc sheet, references SDNP/23/04562/FUL & SDNP/23/04563/LIS. Both applications were withdrawn prior to determination following comments from the planning officer on 15th January 2024 -

Thank you for your application for a zinc clad roof over the steps between the kitchen and the Barn at the above site. I have now had the opportunity to assess the proposals in detail and unfortunately the application will not be capable of receiving officer support due to the reasons set out below:

The zinc clad roof to provide a walkway was previously discussed during the assessment of SDNP/23/02028/FUL. Concerns were raised at this time regarding the proximity of the walkway to the neighbouring property and the harm that this would cause to residential amenity. This concern remains and it is felt that these concerns have still not been addressed within this application. The zinc cladding will be clearly visible for the neighbouring property due to the high sitting above the existing fence line. In addition, zinc is a harsh material that will not easily blend into the surrounding landscape owing to its reflective character.

It is felt that the zinc cladding will have a negative impact and cause harm to the significance of the listed building and its setting is not considered to be outweighed by public benefits by the Authority. It is considered that the zinc clad roof will not conserve or enhance the integrity of the listed building.

The proposal fails to demonstrate a genuine need for the zinc clad roof that out ways the potential harm the roof will case to the surrounding listed building.

- 3.3 There were three aspects to the officer's justification to recommend a refusal –
- a. Harm to neighbouring residential amenity
 - b. Inappropriate roofing material
 - c. No demonstrable need for the zinc clad roof to outweigh harm to the listed building

3.4 *Harm to neighbouring residential amenity:*

The route from the kitchen extension to the barn is included in the drawings approved under SDNP/23/04562/FUL & SDNP/23/04563/LIS. This application seeks to construct a roof over this route.

The design of the proposed roof structure has been discussed with the owner of the adjoining property, Lower Street House. It has been agreed that the existing timber trellis on the boundary wall will be removed and replaced with a new timber trellis that will extend beyond the top of the proposed roof structure and so obscure it from view. This trellis will also screen the open courtyard to the north of the barn from Lower Street House.

3.5 *Inappropriate roofing material:*

The roofing material has been changed from zinc sheet to lead sheet. Lead is a traditional building material, which is found elsewhere in the Swan for flashings and gutters. Lead is malleable and has a dark matt finish which the applicant feels will address the concerns raised over zinc sheet as a “harsh and reflective” material. The lead will be laid using traditional timber core lead rolled joints at the junction of adjoining sheets of lead.

3.6 *No demonstrable need for the zinc clad roof to outweigh harm to the listed building:*

The proposed roof will provide a covered route for staff moving between the kitchen and the barn, to provide service to guests in the barn. A covered route will provide a safer access for staff and protect food and goods in transit.

4. Heritage statement

4.1 The Swan is a Grade II Listed Building located on the southwest side of Lower Street, within the boundaries of the Fittleworth Conservation Area and the South Downs National Park.

4.2 The stables and barn to the rear of the property are not statutory listed buildings by their own right. It is clear, however, that they were constructed before 1948 and associated in use and ownership to the Listed Building (The Swan Hotel) and its setting. The stable block and the barn, therefore, form part of the listing and are considered to be “curtilage listed”.

4.3 The Heritage Statement that accompanied the approved applications (SDNP/23/0208/Ful & SDNP/23/02029/LIS) was prepared by Manorwood and dated May 2023.

4.4 An extract from the statement notes

The proposal also includes the removal of the existing early 20th century extension to the north of the barn. Whilst it is recognised that some parts of the existing extension will be over 110 years old (i.e., the brick side walls), the structure possesses a general prefabricated and modern appearance which is considered to detract significantly from the traditional character of the barn and the site as a whole. Its size and location against the barn’s north elevation obscure views of the barn from the main building and within the Conservation Area (through the carriage passage). The removal of the extension will, therefore, reinstate the barn’s original form, as well as the visual narrative between the barn, the stable block and the main building contributing to their group value and, by extension, enhancing the significance of the Conservation Area.

4.5 The proposed roof structure is located to the east of the 20th century barn extension which will be removed. It is an open structure supported on four 90mm diameter steel posts located close to the existing boundary with Lower Street House. The highest part of the roof is 900mm lower than the barn extension which will be removed.

4.6 It is considered that the proposed roof will have a limited impact on the curtilage listed Barn and the recently approved single storey kitchen extension, as the removal of the barn extension has a greater positive impact, Photograph No 3.



Photograph No 3- view of the barn extension to be demolished, outline of proposed roof shown in red

5. Summary

5.1 This application seeks approval for a roof over the route between the kitchen and the barn at the Swan. The barn is a curtilage listed building whose setting had been significantly degraded by the erection of a large extension on the northern side. This extension has approval to be removed, thereby exposing the northern elevation of the barn to view. The proposed roof is at the eastern end of the northern elevation and will be significantly obscured from view by the kitchen extension currently under construction. The harm to amenity to Lower Street House has been addressed in liaison with the owners, by the replacement of the existing timber trellis on the boundary wall with a higher trellis.