HILLSIDE HOUSE, LOCKERIDGE, WILTSHIRE

Heritage Statement



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Heritage Statement

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Hillside House is a detached house located in the small village of Lockeridge, Wiltshire (approximate NGR SU 14837 67892) and lies within the Lockeridge Conservation Area. The owners of the property are seeking listed building consent to enlarge a window opening to a door in the rear elevation of the house.

1.2 Forum Heritage Services has been commissioned to consider the significance of the listed building, with a focus on the rear elevation, and make an assessment of the potential impact of the proposed work upon that significance.

2.0 DESCRIPTION

2.1 Hillside House was listed at Grade II in 1986 under the name Hillside Cottage. The building is described in the list as:

House. Late C17-early C18. Sarsen with limestone dressings, thatched roof. Two storeys, 3 bays with brick and tiled extension on left. Central boarded door with rustic thatched canopy leading to stair hall. Two and 3-light windows with rebated and ogee moulded mullions and surround and label moulds above. Gable brick stacks. Long sloping roof to lean-to with tall brick stack.

2.2 The rear elevation of Hillside House is constructed in random uncoursed sarson stone, unlike the front and south elevations which are coursed, dressed sarson (Figure 1). There are three windows to ground and first floor levels, most of which appear to be insertions with brick dressings of varying form and quality apart from the central first floor window which has stonework to the sides, and the kitchen window which is surrounded by cement mortar (Figure 2).

2.3 Between the sitting room window and the small central ground floor window there is what appears to be a blocked door with a timber lintel over and vertical joints in the masonry to either side (Figure 3). These joints extend down to ground level which suggests that the present higher ground level to the rear is a result of the build up of the ground rather than the house being built into the slope.



Figure 1 Rear, east elevation.



Figure 2 The kitchen window in the rear elevation.



Figure 3 The southern part of the rear elevation showing the blocked doorway marked by a timber lintel and vertical joints in the masonry.

2.4 The kitchen to the north of the entrance hall is heated by an ingle fireplace to the north wall and is lit by windows to the front and rear elevations. The wall beneath the window to the front is full depth whilst the reveals to the window to the rear continue down to floor level, the sink being set within this alcove (Figure 4). The rear kitchen window is a two-light casement of later 20th century date with modern ironmongery. Notably, this window does not extend the full width of the recess.



Figure 4 Kitchen interior showing the rear window within a full depth alcove.

3.0 POLICY & GUIDANCE BACKGROUND

3.1 The Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 sets out the statutory approach to the management of historic buildings and areas and requires special regard to be given to the desirability of preserving a listed building and any features of architectural or historic interest it possesses, and its setting, under Section 66 – a matter the Courts have held should be afforded considerable importance and weight. Section 72, relating to Conservation Areas requires that 'special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area'.

3.2 The statutory approach is reflected in Core Policy 58 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, adopted January 2015.

3.3 Paragraph 199 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (NPPF) says when considering the impact of development on the significance of a listed building, great weight should be given to its conservation whilst para. 195 states that local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this assessment into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

3.4 Historic England's *Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2* (March 2015) states that understanding the nature of significance is important for understanding the need for and best means of conservation. Understanding the extent of that significance leads to a better understanding of how adaptable a heritage asset may be and provides the essential guide as to how policies should be applied. The following descriptive appraisal will evaluate the building against Historic England's criteria for heritage values set out in *Statements of Heritage Significance Assessing Significance in Heritage Assets* (Historic England Advice Note 12, 2019):

Archaeological interest

There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.

Architectural and artistic interest

These are interests in the design and general aesthetics of a place. They can rise from conscious design or fortuitously from the way the heritage asset has evolved. More specifically, architectural interest is an interest in the art or science of the design, construction, craftsmanship and the creation of buildings and structures of all types. Artistic interest is an interest in other human creative skills, like sculpture.

Historic interest

An interest in past lives and events (including pre-historic). Heritage assets can illustrate or be associated with them. Heritage assets with historic interest not only provide a material record of our nation's history but can also provide meaning for communities derived from their collective experience of a place and can symbolise wider values such as faith and cultural identity.

4.0 ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Designations

4.1 Hillside House is listed at Grade II and is therefore regarded as a building of significance in a national context. The selection of the building in 1986, presumably as part of the Accelerated Resurvey, was probably due to its value as a late 17th/18th-century farmhouse utilising the locally characteristic sarsen stone and thatch.

4.2 Hillside House lies within the Lockeridge Conservation Area, a designated heritage asset.

Assessment of Significance

Archaeological interest

4.3 Hillside House is a relatively simple building that does not appear to have a complex development history although there does seem to have been some rebuilding. The main aspect of the archaeological interest of the house is in the roof where there is potential to date the timbers through dendrochronology which could provide an accurate date for the construction of the house. Overall, it is considered that the house does not merit further expert investigation or analysis and its archaeological interest is low.

Architectural interest

4.4 Constructed in sarsen stone with stone mullioned windows to the front elevation and a thatched roof, Hillside House represents the local vernacular tradition of the late 17th/18th century. The brick addition to the north and west of the later service building attached to the north elevation detracts slightly from the aesthetics of the front elevation but, as an example of vernacular architecture, it is considered that the aesthetic value of the front elevation in particular is high. The aesthetic value of the rear is lower – the use of random uncoursed stonework being indicative of the lower quality of the masonry as this elevation was not seen from the road. The elevation has also been altered with the insertion of various window openings, the windows to this elevation all being timber casements rather than stone-mullioned windows, and the blocking of a door opening. The quality of the dressings to most of these windows demonstrate their later date and the lower quality of execution in terms of the aesthetics of the elevation, particularly the heavy cement render areas around the kitchen window.

4.5 The house retains its historic ground plan form with two principal rooms either side of the central entrance hall and stair compartment, although it appears that there has been some adjustment in relation to the position of the wall between the entrance hall and the kitchen. There are two late 17th or early 18th century chimney pieces with bolection mouldings to the northern ground and first floor rooms which contribute to the significance of the interior. The large ingle fireplace to the kitchen has been at least partially reconstructed with the bressumer over being a modern timber and the stonework above rebuilt.

Historic interest

4.6 Hillside House is a former farmhouse which was built in the late 17th or 18th century. It was a relatively modest, but not small farmhouse which had two principal rooms either side of a central hallway and staircase. The function of these rooms is evident through their fireplaces and contributes to the illustrative historic interest of the house which is considered to be at the upper end of medium.

4.7 The later addition to the north would almost certainly have been built as a service room and, given the lack of evident services contemporary with the house, it is probable that it replaced an earlier service building. Its conversion to form part of the domestic accommodation means that it has lost most of its illustrative historic interest which is considered to be low.

4.8 The loss of the farm buildings formerly associated with Hillside House diminishes the understanding of the house as being a former farmhouse. The house still clearly represents a residence above cottage level in terms of its social status and so contributes to the understanding of the social hierarchy within Lockeridge.

4.9 There are no known individuals of historical significance associated with the property and so there is no associative historic interest based on the present understanding of the building.

5.0 PROPOSALS & ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT

5.1 It is proposed to enlarge the rear kitchen window to form a door to the rear garden. The ground level adjecent to the proposed door will be reduced.

5.2 The rear elevation of Hillside House has been subject to various changes over time with the insertion and/or alteration of window openings and the evident blocking up of a door, the position of which indicates that the present higher ground level to the rear is probably not original. The presence of this blocked door shows that the principle of an opening to the rear does not represent a harmful change to the character of the rear elevation. Additionally, the principle of forming a door opening in the rear elevation was accepted in a previous consent

in 1999 when permission was granted to enlarge the rear window of the sitting room to form a doorway (Figure 5) (K.03748/L).

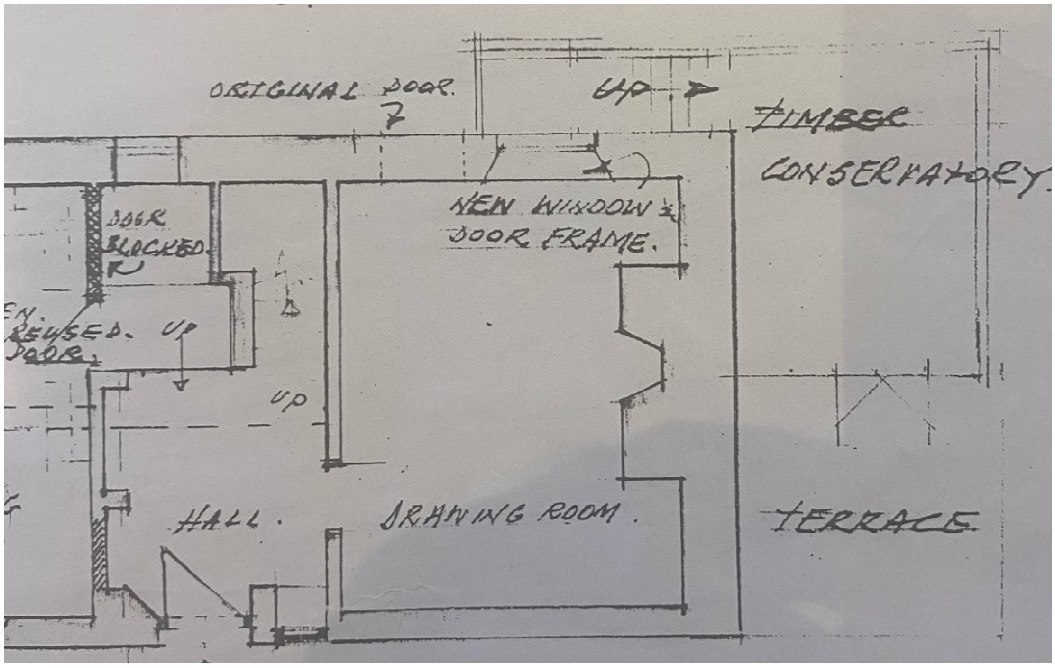

Figure 5 Proposed ground floor plan showing the approved change of a window to a door and the blocked 'original door' in the rear elevation.

5.3 The origin of the present opening to the rear wall of the kitchen is uncertain. The present window does not fit the opening – it is considerably narrower than the width of the reveals – and externally the window has cement render to the sides and below the window. The render to the sides is likely to be masking infill material if the present window had replaced a wider window frame. However, the render below the window would not necessarily be required unless this was also later infill which was not considered suitable to be left exposed. Given that the wall beneath the window is not the full thickness of the wall, as is the case for the window to the front elevation, it is considered that it is also likely to be later infill. The creation of a door opening will, therefore, result in the loss of a relatively small area of fabric which will not harm the significance of the listed building. The cement render around this window is aesthetically poor and is a negative aspect of the appearance of the elevation.

5.4 The casement window is of later 20th century date and its loss will not harm the significance of the listed building.

6.0 CONCLUSION

6.1 The rear elevation of Hillside House has been subject to various changes in terms of the number and form of the openings and there is evidence for the presence of at least one former door opening. The present window opening to the rear wall of the kitchen may also represent a former door opening given that the reveals extend to the ground with a thin section of wall beneath the window in contrast to the window to the front where the wall below the window is full thickness. The render around the window also indicates an attempt to conceal the evidence of change, presumably covering lower quality masonry infill, the cement render detracting from the aesthetic quality of the elevation.

6.2 On the basis of the evidence of the rear elevation, it is concluded that the proposed change of the kitchen window to provide a door opening will not result in harm to the significance of the listed building: there will be no loss of important historic fabric and the proposal will not harm the character of the elevation. The removal of the unsympathetic cement render around the window will represent an improvement in the appearance of the elevation.

6.3 This proposal will have no impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area.

6.4 Accordingly, I can find no conflict in the proposed development with the statutory duty in Sections 66 or 72 of the Act, National Policy in the NPPF or Core Policy 58 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, adopted January 2015.