Wharf Cottage, Semington

Applicant: Mr and Mrs Roddy

Design and Access Statement
including Heritage Statement

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Site Context

Wharf Cottage is a small stone built cottage situated along the canal side in Semington. It sits within a large rectangular site (0.21 hectares) on the south side of the Kennet and Avon Canal below the two Semington Locks and diagonally opposite the old start of the Wilts and Berks canal now infilled/non navigable.

The site was almost certainly developed as a coal depot with extensive outbuildings along the perimeters of the site; stone and brick built canal side mooring and wharf and residents cottage.

The original wharf cottage remains and was Grade II listed in 1985. The perimeter rubble stone walls are largely intact, however, the extensive linear outbuildings of the old coal depot are no longer standing.

The line of the old wharf and mooring is visible along the canal side but has become overgrown and dilapidated over more recent years. Further work to uncover the canal side construction is needed to establish the condition and repair work needed to restore the canal side. This will form part of a future application.

The cottage sits immediately adjacent and perpendicular to the canal on the west side of the site. The original house was built as a simple two up, two down dwelling with central chimney; entrance and stairs, and almost certainly, with a stone built single storey lean-to at the rear. This has since been extended above to provide additional first floor accommodation, finished with felt flat roof, and cement render. A composite block and stone lean-to porch has been added to the front of the cottage, and the original front door removed.

Various garage and outbuildings are sited in an ad hoc fashion along the west side of the site. These were built later than 1948 and as such do not fall within the listing. It is the applicants intentions to clear these in their entirely.

A single largely modern stone and block built outbuilding to the south of the house sits up against what appears to be the original stone wall of the original outhouses, and the site boundary. This in turn, is physically connected to the house by a polycarbonate and timber roofed covered area. For the purposes of the submission we have therefore assumed that this outbuilding is included within the listing, and permission to replace the asbestos roofing over the shed is included within the application.



Entrance to Site, off Canal Bridge



View of House looking north-west



View of cottage & ex'g outbuildings along the west boundary



North elevation rear extension



Covered space to rear

Application Scope

This application is submitted by the new owners of the property to enable them to complete the first phase of restoration and repair work in and around the house itself in order to make the property habitable and lettable.

Work to date has included fitting a new bathroom and kitchen, new building services throughout, (using existing drainage routes) careful repairs to floor joists and windows and generally clearing the overgrown site.

This is important as the house has been cold and empty for so long and will hugely benefit form being lived in again.



Front east facing Elevation



North boundary along the Kennet & Avon Canal

Heritage Statement

Listing record

Heritage Category: Listed Building
Grade: II
List Entry Number: 1021763
Date first listed: 13-Feb-1985

Statutory Address 1:
WHARF COTTAGE, CANAL BRIDGE, SEMINGTON ROAD
District: Wiltshire (Unitary Authority)
Parish: Semington
National Grid Reference: ST 89909 61017
Details: ST 96 SE MELKSHAM WITHOUT CANAL BRIDGE OFF Semington Road (west side) 3/180 Wharf Cottage

Cottage. Late C18. Ashlar front, dressed stone to sides and rear, Welsh slate hipped roof, axial concrete block stack. 2 storeys, 3- windows. Central C20 door has flat stone hood on brackets. Either side are 16-pane sashes. Plat band to first floor, central blind window and one 16-pane sash to sides. To rear is flat-roofed C20 extension. This building is on the south bank of the Kennet and Avon Canal; 1786 - 1810, with which it is contemporary.

We have not been able to uncover further detailed records or historic images of the Wharf and application site.

Development of the wharf as a coal depot has, however, been proposed and supported by members of the Kennet & Avon Trust.

The construction, design and vernacular of the wharf cottage is very similar to the nearby Semington Lock Keepers Cottage, just a short distance east along the canal. (Image: Bottom Right) Both are built using the same facing ashlar, 16 panel sash windows, hipped slate roof and stone plat band at first floor level. This suggests that the two cottages are contemporary and built within the same period of canal construction and business.

The original site, site entrance and cottage of the wharf remain fully intact, consistent with the historic mapping.

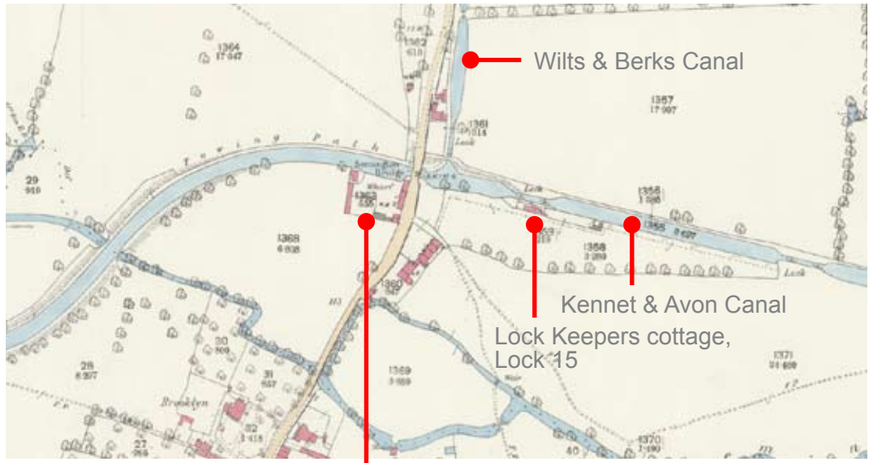
Internally, while the original ceilings, and internal lime plasterwork have long since been removed from the cottage, the original stairs, masonry, timber panelled partitions and spatial arrangement remains fully intact, and the property retains much of the original character of the cottage.

To the front, a modern lean-to porch has been added, but would be readily removable. The original stone hood and brackets over the front door opening remain in place.

To the rear, the kitchen area sits with thick stone walled room - suggesting that there was a rear lean-to attached to the house, in its original or early form. This is supported by the plan form of the house shown on the 1885 map. (Top left image) The first floor walls above, however, are concrete block, and have clearly been added as a twentieth century extension. It does provide much needed first floor accommodation, bathroom in particular, without notably affecting the original planning of the cottage.

Some of the windows retain the original 16 panel sash windows, and are in need of restoration. Two of the windows have been replaced - evidenced by the changed from 16 panel to 12 panel - but are traditionally made sash windows with single glazing the putty fixing nonetheless.

There are no original doors, and windows within the rear extensions are either metal or upvc.



Mapping 1885 Semington Wharf



Mapping 1922 Semington Wharf



Mapping 1942 Semington Wharf







Top: Photo of Semington Bridge - immediately adjacent to the application site, seen on the right side of the photograph. Taken 1977.
Centre: Painting of the Semington Locks, showing the junction with the Wilts and Berks canal on the north side.
Bottom: Semington Lock Keepers Cottage Lock 15, 1912

Proposals

1. Remove Modern Porch

The proposal is to remove the modern porch on the front of the cottage. This has been installed since the building was listed, and has been built over the original stone hood and brackets, which will be repaired as required. Local areas of render within the porch will be removed carefully by hand. A test patch - picture below is included for reference.



Existing Front view of Cottage with porch added



Original stone hood and brackets clearly in place within the roof space of the lean-to porch.
Below right: cement render removed by hand, shows render coming away without causing damage to the ashlar below





2. New Door Joinery

None of the existing doors are original. Both front doors, and the back doors are UPVC and not in keeping with the listed setting. The north side door into the kitchen is a panelled, ledged and braced but is not original, is lightweight and ill fitting.

The new joinery made doors, will follow the vernacular of the original cottage, while also adding much need glazing and day light to the rear kitchen. The new north side kitchen door is proposed as a stable door. To allow for natural ventilation/ window opening within the kitchen, while maintaining enclosure for children and pets if required.



Existing UPVC Front Door and windows to be removed



Existing UPVC Door



Existing North Kitchen Door

3. New Fencing

Historic Mapping clearly indicates that there was a protected and defined garden or yard area in front of the cottage, which is likely to have been defined by timber fencing very similar to that seen in the old images of the nearby Look Keepers Cottage.

It is unlikely that the canal side wharf itself was fenced as it was part of the working yard and depot; but for the safety of the current owners and residents it is proposed that new canal side fencing is installed. Proposed Joinery and designs replicate the traditional canal side fencing.



Old Fencing in Front of Semington Lock 15

4. New Outbuilding Roof

The existing stone and block outbuilding to the south of the house is currently roofed in asbestos, which needs to be removed as a priority.

Permission is sought to reroof the outbuilding in a replacement corrugated galvanised roof - similar to the existing.

All other sheds, garages and outbuildings, built after 1948 are not included within the listing as clearly stated on historic England documentation and are to be removed from the site and the boundary walls behind repaired as needed.



Asbestos roof over outbuilding to be replaced



New slate grey GRP roofing over