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Our ref: 1119/PL

Private and Confidential

Mr Jonathan James
Development Management Department
Wiltshire Council
County Hall
BA14 8JN
jonathan.james@wiltshire.gov.uk

Dear Mr James,

Re: Proposed Single Storey Dwelling on land south of Back Lane, Ramsbury, Wiltshire.
Planning ref: PL/2023/07437

Firstly, thank you for the opportunity to submit a revision of the planning application proposals. We very much hope that we can satisfy any concerns that you and Pippa Card have. In addressing the points that she raised we acknowledge that we could have provided a more thorough articulation of our rationale behind the changes we proposed from that of the approved scheme. We also wish to demonstrate in this letter that we are flexible and willing to listen.

We have grouped your concerns into four main parts. Within each we set out below our clarifications followed by our solutions within the REVISED proposals.

- Please mainly refer to our drawings SK12(B) that overlays the APPROVED plan (shown in red) onto the revised proposals that we are now sharing with you as well as the Section Comparison drawing SK17(A) with similar overlays.
- See also updated drawings:
    - J1119-21 (A) Back Lane, Existing and Proposed Block Plan
    - J1119-23 (D) Back Lane, Proposed Site and Landscape Plan
    - J1119-24 (E) Back Lane, Proposed Floor Plan
    - J1119-25 (B) Back Lane North and South Elevations
    - J1119-26 (A) Back Lane East and West Elevations
    - J1119-32 (-) Back Lane East and West Site Section Elevations
    - J1119-SK16 (-) East & West Elevations as Site Sections

Whilst writing may we also thank you for the Listed Building Consent of the boundary wall alterations and repairs.

1. Visual intrusion into setting of neighbouring heritage properties

Clarification of Application:

- The position of the proposed house has been altered from the Approved plan. The footprint has been pushed back towards the northern wall by 3 metres. This change brings 3 benefits, namely to:
    - increase the feel of openness of the site.
    - keep any impact on significant buildings to an absolute minimum.
    - negate the slight increase in the top level of the roof.
- We have been careful in re-designing the approved dwelling to ensure that it still sits – in total – under the height of particularly the northern boundary wall running along Back Lane.
- Any views over the perimeter walls, from points standing in the surrounding lanes, even from elevated heights, will NOT be interrupted by the proposed dwelling. Clear sight lines over the proposed dwelling of the listed houses, Holy Cross Church and the southern hills beyond remain.

Proposed Solution:

- Pippa Card requested that we remove the 'Family Room'. Whilst this was and is important to us, we have fully removed the Family Room and the Store 'extension' – as you will clearly note on the revised proposals.
- We have revised the form of the Lounge, reduced its size and aligned its southern wall so that its projection is minimal. You will see on the Overlay Drawing SK12(B) that this revised southern Lounge wall is EXACTLY in the same position as the roof edge of the Approved scheme.
- We have also lowered the Finished Floor Level by 300mm to keep any impact to a minimum.
- For the above reasons we feel that the inclusion of the REVISED Lounge and Study would not pose a significant harm to the heritage assets, and that their significance, character and appearance are preserved. Please also refer to the East and West Elevations on drawing 26 (B).

2. The height of the roof has been increased

Clarification of Application:

- Whilst we acknowledge that most of the roof level (121.25) is slightly higher than the approved scheme (121.06), it remains to be below, particularly the northern, boundary walls.
- The position of the proposed house has been altered from the approved plan. The footprint has been pushed back towards the northern wall by 3 metres as can be seen on the Section and Plan Overlay drawings. This move has been made to overcome the height increase.
- The internal floor to ceiling height of the Proposed dwelling has been reduced, it will be 2.6m which is 200mm lower than the Approved 2.8m.
- The main reason for raising the floor level is to avoid surface water drainage issues and provide a more rational level considering the amount of 'cut' into the site. The height therefore is set at a much more practical point which is the result of more design development afforded by the new design process.
- It is worth noting that the approved scheme includes a sloped section of roof over the Lounge which is in fact HIGHER than the proposed. (121.97) – see Comparison Section drawing.

Proposed Solution:

- To help alleviate concerns the proposed floor and subsequently the roof is to be lowered by 300mm so that the floor level is 118.10 (the approved floor height is 117.83). The top of the grass roof will be 121.25.

3. New proposals are larger than approved design

Clarification:

Table 1 below illustrates the various areas of the APPROVED, APPLICATION and REVISED designs which in many instances shows a reduction in developed area not an increase.

Table 1 - Back Lane Areas Comparisons

Description	Approved Design	Application Design	Revised Design	Comments – how we are seeking to compromise
Gross Internal Area	255m2	317m2	285m2	32m2 reduction from our Application which is a 10% reduction
Roof Area	337m2	426m2	369m2	57m2 reduction from our Application which is a 13% reduction
External Hard Surfaces	265m2	233m2	220m2	13m2 reduction from our Application which is a 6% reduction
Drive & Parking (including pedestrian access)	150m2	159m2	157m2	2m2 reduction from our Application
Internal Floor to Ceiling & South Glazing Height	2.8m	2.6m	2.6m	200mm lower
North Entrance Glazing Height & Area	36m / 23.9m2	2.6m / 3m2	2.6m / 3m2	20m2 less area at the entrance
Glazing Area to South & West	87m2	71m2	61m2	10m2 reduction from our Application which is a 14 % reduction
Finished Floor Level	117.83	118.40	118.10	270mm higher

4. Removal of Lounge/Study – proposed by your Conservation Officer

Clarification of Application:

- The Approved scheme has a separate lounge and study – the intention of the planning application process was to enhance the design and layout, not reduce its functionality.
- The "sitting area" that the Conservation Officer refers to is located WITHIN the open plan space which also contains the kitchen and dining areas and therefore serves as a different type of sitting area than a more formal Lounge.
- The Lounge is necessary to receive visitors when the open plan space is in use by other family members.
- It is very unusual for a house of this size and outlay NOT to have a separate Lounge.
- A Study providing private space in which to work from home and to conduct private meetings in is also a necessity in a dwelling of this standard.

Solution within Revised Design:

- We have re-aligned the Lounge's southern wall, so that it falls within the outline of the approved

scheme, and reduced its size. See the Overlay plan.

- The Lounge is set within the centre of the site and not as far east as the Family Room 'extension' that has now been removed from the scheme.
- We believe that the REVISED Lounge, being central to the site and no further forward than the roof edge of the APPROVED scheme, will be no more visually intrusive than the approved scheme and causes no additional harm to heritage buildings nor views across the site, and therefore should remain as part of the re-designed proposals.
- We feel that the design must include the Lounge – without it the layout and use of the house wouldn't be feasible, and the Applicants would need to pursue the appeal process if refused.

Other Benefits to the REVISED Application Design

- Parking is less prominent.
- The length of the East Elevation is cut by half.
- The area of south facing glazing is 30% less than the APPROVED design therefore:
    - light spill at night from the revised dwelling will be far less than the approved dwelling,
    - combined with the reduced floor to ceiling height the risk of solar overheating is much reduced.

We very much hope that you can see that we are doing our best to achieve what you are looking for. We also hope that you will agree that with the adjustments shared in the revised design, any elements of potential significant harm to the setting and visual interruption to heritage assets have been removed.

We look forward to any queries or further requests for clarification and ultimately the approval of the revised proposals. We should of course say that we welcome the opportunity to meet you to discuss should this help you.

Yours Sincerely



Pierre du Toit BArch RIBA
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