SCRACE ARCHITECTS

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Development Services
Economic Development and Planning
County Hall
Bythesea Road
Trowbridge
BA14 8JN

Project Ref: 23_134

20th December 2023

Dear Sir/madam,

Design, Heritage and Access Statement. – Church Farm House, Durrington

SCRACE ARCHITECTS were approached by Mr and Mrs Mills to investigate the planning requirements for the erection of a replacement garage building at Church Farm House at 54 High Street, Durrington, SP4 8AQ.

This application is the result of significant damage being caused to their garage / workshop from falling branches from a neighbouring Cedar tree. We write therefore in reference to our client's proposals to replace the demolished garage / workshop with a new building of similar size.





Imagery showing damage caused by tree debris

Background

It is important to draw attention to the history of this property and the issues it has faced as a result of the neighbouring tree. These are outlined in a chronological history (appended). Without going into detail, this list of events and correspondence provides some context to the experience that our clients have had to endure over the past few months (years). Whilst further endorsement can be provided, we have looked to focus on the key issues in order to seek determination and to remedy the effects of the fallen tree.

Existing Property

With each project SCRACE ARCHITECTS carry out a contextual analysis of the specific site. This helps the team get a feeling for the site in question and an appreciation for the local area.

Statement of historical significance:

Church Farm House is a modest dwelling with a number of characterful features determined in its listing:

https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1183022?section=official-list-entry

SU 14 SE 6/154

DURRINGTON HIGH STREET (east side) Church Farmhouse

II Farmhouse. Late C18. Colourwashed brick, rendered to front, slate roof. Two storeys, three by two bays. Central recessed half-glazed door without doorcase. Twelve-paned sashes with mostly original crown glass. Roof hipped with central valley. Boxed eaves. Gable stacks. Some windows to rear leaded and lean-to porch. Early C20 bay window.

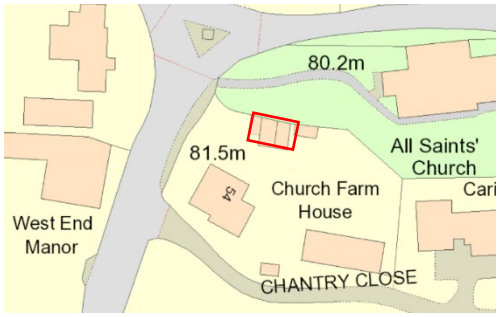
The garage / workshop's predecessor is located within the confines of a listed building, Church Farm House, and as such is curtilage listed. Although curtilage listed the current condition of the churchyard walls from our clients side are blockwork and offer little in terms of appearance of character. In fact, it has been hidden from view since the erection of the original outbuildings some 50 years ago.

The planning history related to the property is listed below:

- *Planning Applications: S/2006/2041*
- *Planning Applications: S/2007/0864*
- *Planning Applications: S/2008/1243*
- *Planning Applications: PL/2023/02826*

Setting

The property is located at the heart of Durrington adjacent to All Saints Church. The site is largely hidden from the road and is bounded on all sides by the churchyard wall and foliage to the front. Two brick piers define its entrance. Access is constrained. Outbuildings adjacent and further back within the site frame the courtyard drive. Entrance to the main house is to the right on entering the site.



Extracts from https://wiltscouncil.maps.arcgis.com/apps

The site can be viewed from the church yard and beyond but is shielded by the church yard wall that acts as a foil. A cob wall, poorly maintained, and damaged during the tree fall also had to be taken down.

Whilst the cob is of historical interest and has been set aside for retention it is hard to understand the merit of this portion of churchyard wall that had been hidden, had not been maintained and had already failed (in part) prior to fall.

It is our clients view and that of those charged with the day-to-day management of the wall that a blockwork retaining structure may be more appropriate. We are minded to agree as this is a more typical method of retaining the existing ground and would ensure that our client did not lose amenity and access to their courtyard.

The garage was previously used to carry out repairs to classical motor vehicles. Any new design needs to accommodate this need. The character and the use of the property as a garage / workshop is to be retained.




Imagery showing content stored in garage

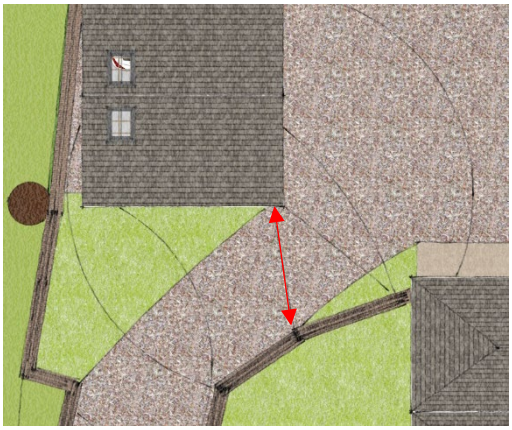
Design Approach

In assisting our clients with their application we have taken an objective view of the proposals and carried out a survey of the existing slab and the proposed building.
In preparing a 3D model we have been able to investigate the opportunities for the siting and shaping of proposals. Particular attention has been given to the enhancement of its appearance within the listed building setting and the Conservation Area.



Sketch showing access to site

We have looked to develop a design that will fit in with setting as well as improve the outcome for our client. Whilst a couple of options have been developed, our clients preferred option has been chosen on the grounds that it provides a better overall appearance to the listed building setting and its context.



Plan showing pinch point between new garage and existing wall

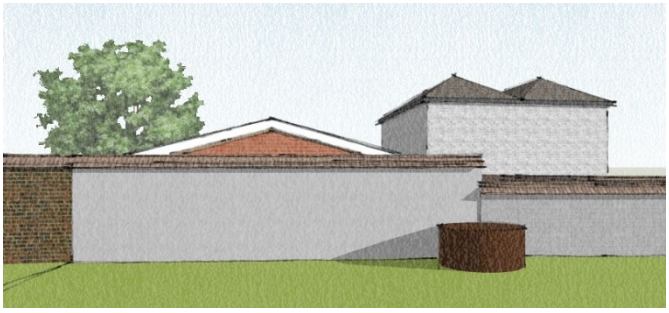
In looking at the environment around we were keen to look away from the original corrugated roofing and shanty like appearance of the previous garage and design something more in keeping. Avoiding a flat roof is the best approach in securing this. As such we looked to propose a slated pitched roof that was more like the existing house.

In developing designs for a new building particular consideration has been made to:

- Access for maintenance
- Access to the driveway by larger vehicles
- Maintenance of the new building
- Material choices

In mapping out the existing structure and assessing the site it is clear that it is not possible to move the garage forward by 1m as this will impact on the access and amenity of their property. As a goodwill gesture and in order to provide moderate access and breathing space the proposed workshop building is set forward 300mm from its current location and narrowed in depth and width. This design choice will:

- Reduce ridge height visible from churchyard
- Ensure access to the courtyard
- Enable maintenance of the churchyard wall and the new building



Plan showing pinch point between new garage and existing wall

The proposed roof is kept to 15 degrees to ensure that the new workshop does not appear as significant from over the top of the churchyard wall. To achieve 15 degrees the choice of tile is limited to a composite tile in the Marley Eternit range. Should natural slate be preferred, this would result in the roof being at 22.5 degrees and the ridge 300mm higher.

Materials

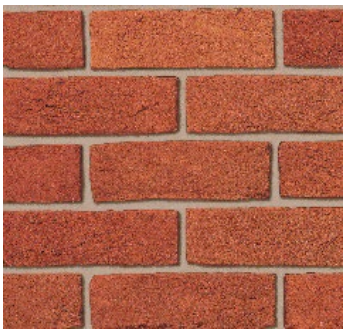
As the original garage had been erected around mid C20 the existing fabric was designed to be practical and not visually appealing, comprising predominantly timber with a corrugated roof.



Sketch view of new garage with surrounding context

The external material palette of the proposals has been limited to three materials; timber cladding, slate and brickwork. Where possible, materials will be sourced from local suppliers.

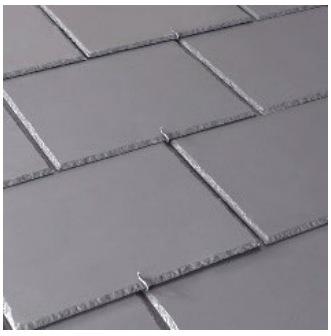
Walls Brick / Timber Cladding





Roof Composite Slate – Marley Eternit Cedral Black / Blue – MMSETERTHRU





Rainwater Ogee profile - UPVC / Aluminium

In Summary

It is disappointing that it has taken so long for our clients to find resolution of the destruction of their property. The proposals developed as part of this application provide a framework by which a sensible solution can be found. The new traditional Workshop design improves the appearance of these outbuildings, its immediate context and that of the Conservation Area.

Given the circumstances we do not think that it is fair or acceptable they stand to lose amenity at the behest of decisions made to replace the boundary wall. Whilst a cob wall may be the preference of the DAC and the Conservation Officer it is not that of Mr and Mrs Mills and others. We would encourage both Wiltshire Council and the DAC to agree to both this design and preferably a block wall in lieu of cob.

Either way we would hope that a decision or feedback on this application can be made as soon as practicably possible. We believe proposals are acceptable in planning terms and look forward to your approval of this so I clients can move on with their lives.



3D View of preferred design - Option 01A

Drawings listed below have been uploaded to the planning portal.

- P000 Site Location Plan
- P001 Site Layouts EX & PR
- 23_124 Design, Heritage and Access Statement

An application fee of £0 for this application has been paid on the planning portal. If you have any queries in relation to this application, please do not hesitate to contact our office.

Yours sincerely

Tim Scrace
BA BArch RIBA ARB

For and on behalf of
SCRACE ARCHITECTS

Abridged History of Garage and Cob Wall

- 1963 Garage built by previous owner
- 1988 Storm Damage
- 25/03/19 Transfer of ownership of churchyard to Wiltshire Council (WC) owing to tree maintenance responsibilities
- 01/07/19 Ownership transferred to WC

- 10/03/23 TREE FALLS ON PROPERTY

Wiltshire Council and Diocese of Salisbury Consultation

- 26/04/23 Claim form submitted to WC
- 26/05/23 Recommendations / preference for block wall by Church Warden
- 26/05/23 Andrew Minting (AM) - Planning requirement for new garage.
- 28/06/23 Application to Salisbury Diocese (Planning Authority) as churchyard.
- 15/08/23 Recommendations / preference for block wall by WC F&A Technical Officer
- 24/07/23 Faculty application (DAC) deferred until planning application via WC.
- 19/09/23 Feedback from AM and DAC – preference for cob wall.

Independent Advice sought by Client due to concerns about delay and impact on amenity, cost and access. Scrace Architects contacted.

- 27/11/23 Scrace Architects Appointed
    - Site Visit / Survey
    - Feasibility Study

Options developed to test replacement opportunities on site. Studies and survey demonstrate possible impact of amenity and limitations of access in choosing cob wall over block. Alternative proposals developed for planning to provide framework for decision making to enable most suitable replacement of property as soon as practically possible.

- 20/12/23 Planning Application by client – preference for block wall.