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42 Hilperton Road
Trowbridge
Wiltshire
BA14 7JQ

Your Ref: PL/2024/00488 AND PL/2023/11025

15 February 2024

Dear Sir/Madam

Comments on Planning Application PL/2024/00488 AND PL/2023/11025 for a flat roofed infill extension between existing extension and adjoining property at rear of 41 Hilperton Road, Trowbridge BA14 7JQ

Thank you for your letter dated 19 January 2024 inviting me to comment on planning application PL/2024/0048 (Householder planning permission) and PL/2023/11025 (Listed building consent).

LISTED BUILDING STATUS AND HISTORIC SETTING

The applicant's property is at the end of a terrace of three Grade II listed buildings (List Entry Number 1364204) built in bath stone circa 1823 situated in the Hilperton Road Conservation Area. As you can see from Attachment 1 of the historic map dating from 1887 the properties have largely retained their historic setting, footprint and land.

The properties are built of bath stone (interior and exterior walls), timber and Welsh slate and have no foundations. They are smaller than they appear and are essentially Georgian styled cottages built together, probably as an attractive and functional vista to the palatial properties constructed on Hilperton Road. The properties were built well and to a high standard at the time with quality fireplaces, window shutters to the ground floor windows, front doors, many period features and sash windows. They are an important heritage asset and both the buildings and setting enjoy special protection under Wiltshire Council's own planning policy.

The terrace of three originally shared a horse and carriage housed in the stable block to the rear of 43 and the gardens of 42 and 43 were once the paddock.

PAST DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROPERTIES

41 Hilperton Road had its slate roof replace with concrete tiles before the listing took place. At some point in the 1970-80s, considerable work was carried out in number 41 resulting in the removal of the original staircase, enlargement of the bathroom into the upstairs hallway removal of a downstairs hallway wall and upstairs fireplaces and the subdivision of the front bedroom to create a corridor. A 2005 rear extension was completed in bath stone, reclaimed Welsh slate and with conservation windows sharing the same footprint as the buildings it replaced. A new patio was laid at that time which raised the height of the ground by approximately 50cm in the area the proposed extension would be built on. At some point the front garden was converted into a car park.

Number 42 was in the same ownership for decades and so remained largely untouched apart from modernisation and repair work. The ground floor rear window was replaced with French doors circa 1900 with steps leading up to it.

Number 43 was in a similar position until renovated between 2018 and 2021 with a loft and rear extension, partial removal of rear chimney breast and timber floors replaced with damp proof course and concrete and all lime mortar and plaster on the interior and exterior that needed replacing was replaced with mortar containing cement and gypsum plaster. The renovation resulted in over £10,000 damage to our property due to errors on the plans. The developer also subdivided the garden and retains ownership of the land locked lower half of the rear garden. Wiltshire Council and the developer are presumably now waiting for the four-year enforcement period for unauthorised building works to expire.

OBJECTIONS TO PLANNING EXTENSION

1. EFFECTS ON NEIGHBOURING PROPERTY

The planned extension will dominate the setting, overshadowing the properties. As you can see from the images below the plans would have a severe impact on the quality of the outlook and character of our property:

Current view from our upstairs window:



View with proposed extension in place:



At night with the lantern light illuminated and the newly formed archway in the neighbouring kitchen people will look up through the windows directly into our window 3 meters away.

From the outside of our property the newly clad OSB wall and rubber roof will look out of place and scale with the connected listed building and overshadows the setting:

Current view from our rear garden:



View with proposed extension in place:



The proposed extension incorporates large areas of reflective material and does not match the height of the surrounding ridge heights. The architect has tried to accommodate the existing rear ground floor Georgian sash window the top of which is higher than the eaves of the existing extensions which it infills. The modern materials selected: OSB board; concrete; synthetic rubber; plaster board and galvanised steel posts will not match the buildings of traditional materials in which it is connected. The style of door, roof and lantern lights selected do not enhance or match the surrounding buildings and detract from the building's proportions.

Current view from above:



View with proposed extension in place:



DRAINAGE

At present rainwater for the entire front part of the main roof drains along a hidden lead lined gully behind the front parapet then along the side of number 41 to the rear gutter. Water from the back of the roof also flows into this gutter and then down 3 drainpipes to individual drains located on each property.

The existing plans in the application do not show the drainpipe currently in place highlighted in the photo below:





The plans as they stand suggest that all the water from the current drainpipe and the new rubber flat roof would drain down the new box gutter supported by steel posts and attached to our property which currently drains via low profile guttering on our rear extension into our drain. The existing drain and guttering will not be able to cope with the additional volume of water.

The raised patio caused significant damp issues to both the rear wall of the main building at number 41 and to the wall of our rear extension. The lime mortar and plaster failed and was replaced by the previous owner of number 41 in 2015. A French drain was cut around the patio resolving this issue. I am concerned that the planned extension incorporating a damp proof membrane over a concrete floor butting up to both walls and raising the height of the floor still further without any space for the maintenance of the external wall of our extension may cause damp issues in the future that we will be unable to rectify. Will new air bricks be introduced?

WILTSHIRE CORE STRATEGY 2015 CORE POLICY 58: ENSURING THE CONSERVATION OF THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

Clause 6.138 states:

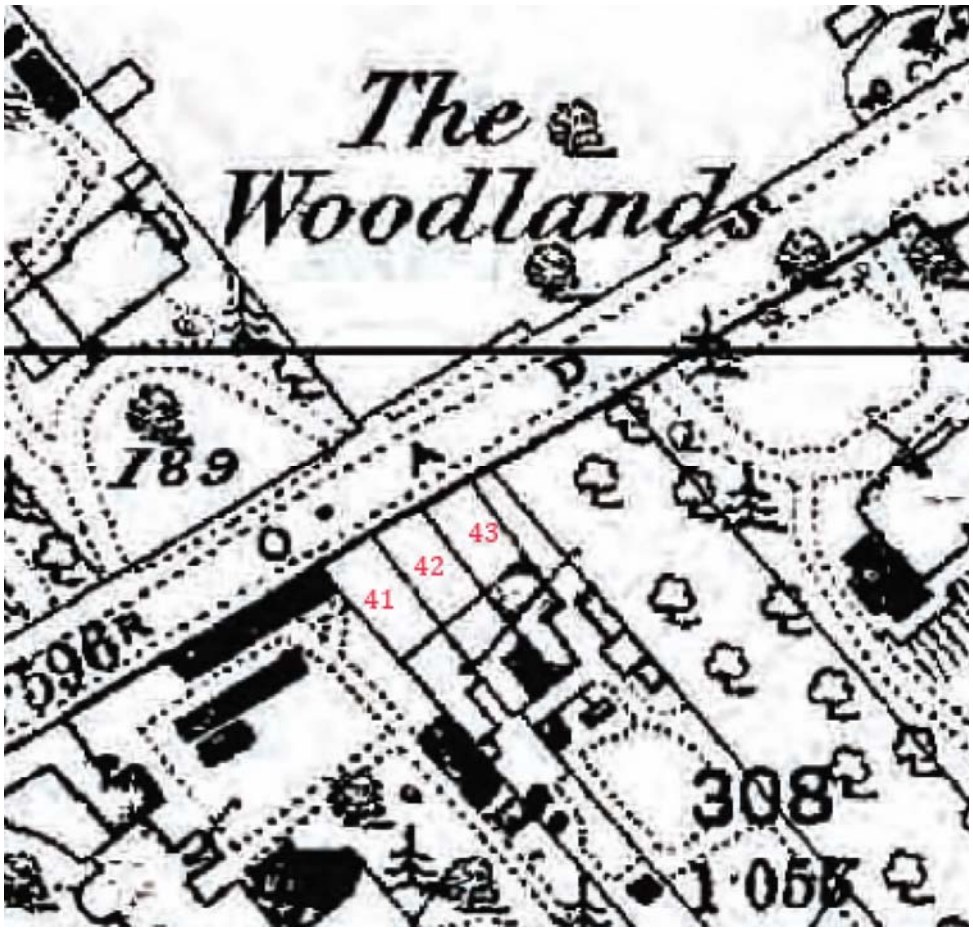
"…alterations will only be acceptable where they are consistent with the conservation of a heritage asset's significance. Consequently, it is expected that development will be of the highest standard in order to maintain and enhance the quality of the area or building and be sensitive to its character and appearance. In considering applications for new development in such areas, the council will seek to ensure that the form, scale, design and materials of new buildings are complementary to the historic context."

It is difficult for those of us with an interest in maintaining listed buildings to do so if neighbouring interconnected properties are developed with poorly conceived and executed designs using the wrong type of materials. It is submitted that the proposed infill extension will detract from and is likely to cause damage to heritage assets (both 41 and 42) and does not enhance the quality of either building or the wider area.

Yours faithfully,

Roland Smithies

ATTACHMENT 1: HISTORIC SETTING



Source: 1887 Ordnance Survey



2024 Aerial