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Our ref: L01555255

9 February 2023

Dear Ms Wright

Arrangements for Handling Heritage Applications Direction 2021

CRANE HOUSE, 84 CRANE STREET, SALISBURY, SP1 2QD
Application No. PL/2023/00346

Thank you for your letter of 23 January 2023 regarding the above application for listed building consent. On the basis of the information available to date, we offer the following advice to assist your authority in determining the application.

Historic England Advice

Significance of the designated heritage asset

No 84 Crane Street is an early timber framed building, which originally extended to the terrace property to its east, no 82.

Recent buildings recordings have found much of the exposed timber to have been re-used and relocated, indicating the 16th century as a possible date of origin.

The building rises for three storeys terminating with a moulded cornice and parapet and an old tiled gabled end roof, with the ridge running parallel to the street.

In the late 18th century the original house was re-fronted and has acquired a front elevation with brick on the lower storey and painted hung mathematical. It has sash windows articulating four bays and raised and fielded panelled doors with pilasters and bracketed consoles positioned to the west.

Probably at this time the house was divided in two properties with a chimney stack inserted within the party wall.

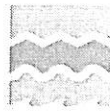
Alterations from the 20th century pertain to its change of use to a commercial activity and more recently, as offices. They include a new tripartite window to the front with recessed arch, insertion of new internal partitions and installation of new services and



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the creation of a rear single storey extension.

Because of its historic and architectural interest, no 84 at Crane Street has been designated as a Grade II* heritage asset, placing it among the top 5.2% of the most important historic building in the country.

Impact of the proposals

The current application seeks consent for works associated with a change of use, reverting the building from offices to a four-bedroom family home.

We welcome the principle of this scheme as it will ensure the full re-use of this now vacant property and will offer the opportunity to revert some inappropriate alterations carried out in the past, whilst revealing and enhancing the character, the appearance and the significance of this important heritage asset.

Whilst some of the proposed works appeared well considered in this respect, other fail to take those opportunities and are considered harmful to the significance of the heritage assets.

In particular, we have concerns about the following elements of the scheme:

Subdivision of Room 2

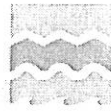
Despite modern alterations, this area is considered of high significance as part of the principal historic rear rooms of the property. Already compromised by the 1950s alterations, the proposed subdivision into smaller utility spaces will erode the large proportions of the room as well as affect the historic layout of the building.

Whilst we have no objection to the replacement of the existing suite of rear extension/outbuildings, we are uncomfortable with the proposals of locating the principal kitchen/diner functions there, leaving this rear range as a collection of secondary, functional areas, compromising the sense of hierarchy of the spaces in the house.

Opportunities here exist to regain the larger proportions of the room by demolishing the 1950s space that access Room 1, re-integrating the fireplace into the room and create here a family kitchen/diner, pushing utilities into a smaller rear extension.

We understand that this area is darker than what might be desirable. Whilst this is to be expected in certain parts of a timber-framed building and part of its inherent character, we would be prepared to consider options to allow further light into this





space.

These may include lightening of the dark paint on the beam; introduction of larger openings to the rear wall and locating a more linear, smaller extension to the eastern side of rear garden which would maintain a larger patio area directly outside Room 2.

Currently this proposal is considered to erode the legibility and integrity of the buildings historic plan-form, layout and hierarchy of spaces that is harmful to the overall

Installation of a partition in Room 6

The proposed partition to create an antechamber to the new bedroom in room 6 is also raises concern. The partition would affect the legibility of the historic proportion and size of the room, also severing from view the chimney stack on the east wall.

Once again other options that do not affect the fabric, such as a different use for this room or creating a more solid barrier with use of appropriate furniture, should be explored in the first instance. The harm caused by the proposal is not clearly and robustly justified.

Insertion of Ensuite pod in Room 8

Despite being a small structure, the proposal for installation of WC and ensuite shower pod in room 8 would also still introduce a level of visual and physical harm in a space which clearly carry a lot of the historic, aesthetic and evidential value of the building.

Less harmful options such as a sensitive conversion of Room 9 and 10 as bathroom /changing rooms for the proposed master bedroom could be considered. Free standing bathroom and sanitary furniture could be accommodated here, leaving the proportions of all rooms on this floor intact and creating a generous and characterful master bedroom suite in this part of the house.

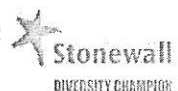
Services and Insulation

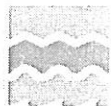
Following up from the last intervention discussed, we would also flag up that the application makes reference too, but does not include, any detailed information on service runs and drainage. The proposed re-routing of the services runs and drainage within the building is considered intrusive and potentially highly destructive for the historic fabric. Therefore, we would ask that detailed drawings are provided at an early



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stage following revision for locating WC and bathrooms along the lines discussed above.

Given the significant impact that this may have on the building's core historic and evidential value, we would be uncomfortable with these details to be considered post-determination.

Finally, the application does not detail proposals for thermal improvements and insulation. Standard insulation approaches could have a very detrimental impact on an early timber- building framed and it may not be acceptable in a building of this type.

As this requires careful analysis, we would recommend that this information is also provided to your specialist staff as early in the application stage as possible. We would be happy to have our technical specialist reviewing that aspect of the proposals once further information are provided.

Planning Policy Context

Historic England's advice is provided in line with the importance attached to significance and setting with respect to heritage assets as recognised by the Government's revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and in guidance, including the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), and good practice advice notes produced by Historic England on behalf of the Historic Environment Forum (Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Notes (2015 & 2017)).

In making your determination your authority will need to ensure that 'great weight is given to the conservation of the heritage asset. This is irrespective of whether [the] harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance (NPPF, 199).

You will also need to assess whether there is conflict between any aspect of the proposal and those assets' significance and if so how that might be avoided or minimised (NPPF, 195) and whether the harm caused by the current proposals is clearly and robustly justified (NPPF, 200).

Historic England's Position

Crane House is a Grade II* early timber-framed building with an interesting history of different uses and alterations.

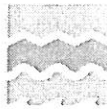
Whilst some elements of the proposals are considered beneficial in liberating and restoring historic features and spaces obscured by inappropriate interventions, this



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same approach is not followed throughout the scheme. This results in new subdivisions and super imposition of features that detract from the character of this historic interior.

Due to the harm to plan form, aesthetic and historic value outlined above, we would recommend that certain elements of the proposals are revised along the lines set out above.

Recommendation

Historic England has concerns regarding the application on heritage grounds. We consider that the issues and safeguards outlined in our advice need to be addressed in order for the application to meet the requirements of paragraphs 195 and 200 of the NPPF.

In determining this application you should bear in mind the statutory duty of section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to have special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings or their setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess.

Your authority should take these representations into account and seek amendments, safeguards or further information as set out in our advice. If there are any material changes to the proposals, or you would like further advice, please contact us.

Yours sincerely

Alessandra Perrone

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