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Saturday, 21st February 2026

re. Planning Application: PL/2026/00762
'Random Forge', 57 Upper South Wraxall

Dear Sir / Madam,

We write to formally object to aspects of this application.

We have discussed our concerns with Mr & Mrs. Smith and they have explained the thinking behind their proposals. It is our hope that they may amend their proposal in the light of the concerns we have expressed but, in the meantime, it is necessary for us to formally oppose the proposal as it currently stands.

The proposal includes demolishing the 20c extensions and additions, demolishing the existing garage, moving the site of the existing swimming pool and creating a terrace linking the house and new swimming pool. We are happy to see the demolition of these 20c elements and we consider the design of the new elements, proposed to replace them, to be an improvement on the existing 20c elements. We would be delighted to see the uPVC window frames in the 17c cottage replaced. We have no concerns about the re-siting of the swimming pool.

The proposal also includes demolishing an 18c lean-to extension which appears to be built in random rubble stone. While, in principal, we would prefer not to see the 18c lean-to demolished, we accept that it does not have great architectural merit.

Lastly, the proposal speaks of 'rebuilding of historic cottage to address structural and fabric failings'.

While the proposal speaks of 'rebuilding', it is clear that the intention is to demolish this 17c cottage and to erect a new building. The plans show this new building, replacing the 17c cottage, is on a larger footprint and in a different location.

The proposed replacement for the original cottage does not resemble the existing cottage. The stone porch and the door is lost, the mullioned windows are lost and the line of the abutment of the roof appears to be lowered. While it is difficult to be sure what lies under the front facade of the cottage it would appear to be of coursed rubble stone. This would be in keeping with other 17c cottages in the village. We believe this element should be retained.

The reason given for taking down the existing 17c cottage is to 'address structural and fabric failings'. We accept Mr & Mrs Smith's report that the building is very damp and we note the crack in the front facade. It appears to us that the likely cause of the damp is the inappropriate impermeable painted render (referred to in the proposal), which has prevented the walls from 'breathing'.

We note that the proposal for 'rebuilding' proposes the use of lime mortar. We have our own experience of restoring a 17c cottage in the village and believe that the damp could be addressed by removal of the impermeable render and repointing the existing cottage with lime mortar. We believe that the structural crack should be remediable without demolishing the cottage.

The cottage lies within the South Wraxall conservation area. It is our belief that the designation of the conservation area is based upon the richness of its historic village architecture, principally 17c stone cottages and other 17c buildings such as the 'Longs Arms', many still with their stone tiled roofs. The cottage lies within the South Wraxall conservation area. It appears, to us, to be contrary to the spirit of the Conservation Area to allow this cottage to be demolished.

Finally, we wish to point out that, when we met with Mr. & Mrs. Smith at the house on 21st February, the statutory planning notice was not displayed outside the house. Indeed, it was lying on a work surface inside the house. Mr Smith undertook to ensure that it was displayed on the following day and has since done this. The Parish Council considered the Application on 19th February. Given this was before the statutory notice was displayed, we are concerned that other villagers, like ourselves, were not alerted the fact that we were in the planning consultation period. We note that the given date for the end of the consultation period is 10th March. This date is less than three weeks from the date of display of the statutory planning notice.

Yours faithfully,

Dr. Laura Lodge, M.B.; Ch.B.; L.L.M.; M.R.C.G.P.

Dr. George Lodge, B.Sc.; L.R.C.P; M.R.C.S.; M.B.; B.S.; D.P.M.; M.R.C. Psych.