

HERITAGE AND DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

Background

35 Sample Street is a three storey detached dwellinghouse facing east onto Sample Street.

The property consists of a timber framed building forming the east half of the property which was re-fronted with low level timber framing being replaced with Flemish bond brickwork and the upper wall being covered with tile hanging in the early 18th century. The building also has a narrower rear section with a separate roof structure and there is a central box gutter between the front and rear of the house.

The partition between the east and west part of the house is timber framed and might have originally been an external wall.

The original part of the building has irregular shaped rafters which are pegged at high level whilst the later rear section has standard sized rafters with a ridgeboard.

The property has had three extensions since the Georgian remodelling which consist of two two-storey 1960s & 1970s extensions on the north elevation with a box gutter between the two, and a rear west elevation single storey library wing believed to have been constructed in the 1980s.

The building has not been properly maintained for many years and some inappropriate maintenance works are causing damage to the building.

Mr & Mrs Smith recently purchased 35 Sample Street and wish to carry out essential repairs to conserve the building and also to undertake sympathetic alterations to improve the amenities of the house. The works will ensure the continuing vitality of the house and prolong its lifespan.

Defects

The house requires maintenance and repair works to protect the historic fabric of the building and most of these works are like-for-like replacements and will not require Listed Building Consent:-

- Inappropriate cement mortar has been used on the south east external chimney brickwork which has led to frost damage of brickwork. The cement mortar will be carefully removed by hand and repointed using lime mortar in order to reduce the risk of any further damage to the brickwork. Also mortar fillets provided on top of the sloping section of the chimney have not properly secured tiles and will be replaced with tiles and battens.

- The central box gutter between the two main roof slopes is leaking and causing damage to the second floor wall and sloping ceiling coverings and the lead gutter and deck is to be replaced. The original west roof structure requires re-roofing together with the lower part of the east slope of the rear extension. This will be a like-for-like replacement with hand made clay tiles being used.
- Water penetration through the original roof structure has damaged the lath and plaster wall covering against the gable ends in the east second floor and re-roofing the property will reduce rainwater being introduced into the second storey. The gable ends will be repaired with lime plaster.
- In the 1980s single storey extension, movement joints have not been provided in the wall and vertical cracks have opened up especially in line with ducting for electrical cables. Movement joints will have to be formed together with replastering sections that are off key.
- Trees were previously growing against the garage and this has caused the wall to crack. Proposals to repair this include the insertion of resin bonded restraint rods to tie the garage together to avoid further movement and cracking. Also the tree has caused the roof tiles to be displaced and, given that there is no sarking felt, this has resulted in water penetration through the roof to rafters below. Some battens have slipped and the garage will be re-roofed to match existing but with a dam proof breather membrane below the battens to protect rafters against further water penetration. The tree causing the damage was recently removed.
- Rainwater goods do not have correct falls to downpipes and some of these are blocked. It is proposed to provide cast iron end caps and decorate and adjust rainwater goods to ensure correct drainage from the building. Some rainwater goods may have to be replaced to match existing.
- Some windows are suffering from timber decay and the proposals include for replacing defective timber in accordance with SPAB details and for repainting in colour to match existing.

All the above repairs will protect the building against further decay conserving it for the future.

Proposed Alterations

Construction of New Drive

The existing garage serving 35 Sample Street is positioned tight against Sample Street with no pedestrian pavement. Vehicles leaving the garage have no vision splay and, therefore, opening garage doors and exiting the garage is hazardous because of the proximity of the road.

In order to improve road safety and the amenities of the house, Mr & Mrs Smith propose constructing a drive north of the house. The driveway would have metal gates to match the existing railings at 35 Sample Street and brick piers matching the existing boundary wall. The drive would be covered in gravel.

There are two existing large driveways directly opposite 35 Sample Street and one serving a neighbours property south of the garage. The construction of the proposed driveway would therefore be in keeping with surrounding properties.

The new driveway would measure 8.5m deep and 5.6m wide. The proposed piers would be approximately 1.55m tall. The new gates would be approximately 1.32m tall. The retaining wall will be approximately 1.55m tall to match the height of the piers and will be stepped with a narrow flowerbed at mid height. Photograph 6 shows the existing crossover between the road and the existing pedestrian gate north of the house. This arrangement would be increased in size with tarmac to match existing being laid (with appropriate sub base to Highway standards) the full width of the drive.

Replacing the Garage Door

The garage door is large and manually operated which requires the owners of the property to stand in the road at Sample Street and for cars to temporarily park blocking the road, whilst unloading into the garage which is used for storage.

The proposed replacement door would be in timber to remain in keeping with other joinery at the property and would be electronically operated by remote control in order to eliminate safety hazards.

Relocation of Kitchen

The existing kitchen units are at the end of their serviceable life and do not meet the requirements of modern standards of living. Therefore Mr & Mrs Smith wish to relocate the kitchen into the 1980s single storey west extension and use the existing kitchen as a formal sitting room.

As part of these works, french windows will be installed in the modern 1980s extension and conservation style rooflights will be installed in the south slope of the roof to improve natural daylighting. The rooflights will be at high level and will not affect privacy.

A new utility room will be constructed within the existing garage to lead off the kitchen which will improve amenities without affecting the original house because the alterations will be within the 1980s extension and garage. Part of the garage felt flat roof will be raised and clad in tiles to facilitate the new utility room. A rooflight will be installed in the new roof to improve daylighting.

The new raised roof would measure approximately 3m x 6m and be approximately 1.1m tall, being set below both the garage and rear extension roof.

Removal of Larder

Because the kitchen is being repositioned, the existing larder which is located within the modern north extension will be opened up into the boot room and lightweight partitions will be constructed in the existing kitchen doorways which currently serve the larder and corridor into the north extensions.

These alterations will use lightweight stud partitions only and are fully reversible should future owners of the property wish to revert back to the previous layout. The larder partition, which forms part of the modern extension, will be removed to create a WC within the boot room.

Constructing a Stud Partition

At the rear of the first floor of the house, access to the attic stairs and the south west bedroom is through the main bedroom. This does not allow privacy to the main bedroom and it is proposed to construct a lightweight stud partition to screen the main bedroom.

This alteration is purely to improve the amenities of the house. This work would be fully reversible and would not affect the historic fabric of the building. Purpose made doors would be used to match other doors in the house.

Replacing Sanitary Fittings

The sanitary fittings at 35 Sample Street are old fashioned but not of sufficient age to justify conservation. New quality fittings are to be installed in all bathrooms at the property in a style to suit.

Summary

The above works seek to repair and maintain the property and to prolong the life of the historic fabric of the building, remove past inappropriate repairs and improve the amenities of the house to allow for modern living.

All works will be fully in accordance with English Heritage definition of listing : *'Listing is not intended to mothball a building, preserving it as it appears at the time of listing. It is widely acknowledged that the long term interests of an historic building are best served by keeping it in use, often the use for which it was designed, and that buildings need to change and adapt. Listing should be seen as the start of the process rather than an end in itself flagging the significance of an asset so that its future management can enhance its contribution to local, regional and national life. In short it is a dynamic not a static regime recognising that most historic buildings have undergone significant change their lifespan and that future change is necessary to ensure their continued vitality.'*

35 Sample Street has changed significantly over the last 250 years, being re-fronted in Georgian times and extended within the last 40 years. The current proposals will improve the amenities of the house, ensuring the building's use for many years to come whilst respecting the character of this Listed Building.

Planning Policy

The following policies are taken from the Local Plan adopted March 2006 -

Policy LBD₁ - Limits to Built Development

The property is within a Principle Settlement. It therefore complies with Policy LBD₁ by helping to concentrate most developments within the built up area.

Policy EN₃ – Alterations to Buildings of Architectural & Historic Interest

The proposed works aim to protect this Listed Building from any further damage caused by defects and alterations will be in keeping with the house and surrounding area.

The works comply with the criteria as set out in Policy EN₃ :

1. There will be no impact on the features which give the building its special architectural interest as only minimal alterations will take place to the original structure.
2. There is no proposed change in the use of the house.
3. The building's special character will be preserved and repairworks will conserve original structural fabric.
4. There will be no impact on the views or historic skyline.
5. The proposed works will provide a significant contribution to the upkeep of an historic building preserving it for future generations. If the repairs are not carried out, it could lead to further deterioration requiring original timbers to be replaced in the future.

Policy EN₄ – Demolition in Conservation Areas

The proposals do not involve any demolition and will prolong the life of the building.

Policy EN₅ – Development in Conservation Areas

The proposals comply with EN₅ because they meet the following criteria:

1. The proposals will help to preserve and enhance the building and the new driveway is in keeping with the character of the surrounding area as properties opposite 35 Sample Street have similar driveways.
2. The sympathetic alterations will ensure that the character of the Conservation Area is enhanced and will be in keeping with surrounding properties.
3. The layout and arrangement of the original building will not be affected by the proposals.
4. Materials will be used to match existing, such as the drive brick piers and gates, timber french windows in the modern 1980s extension together with conservation type rooflights, all in keeping with the character of the Conservation Area.
5. The proposals are suitable for a private dwellinghouse and do not increase the intensity of use.
6. The proposals do not affect any protected trees.
7. Under car parking and access requirements, the character and amenity of the area would not be adversely affected and would still maintain open green space north of the new driveway between houses.

EN26 – Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

These proposals are minor and would not adversely affect the High Weald AONB because 35 Sample Street is located within the Principal Settlement of Sample Village.

EN27 – Special Landscape Areas

The development would cause no significant harm to the important landscape character of the area and all materials to be used will match existing.

Planning Policy Guidance 15 – Planning & the Historic Environment

These proposals are fully in accordance with PPG15 and follow the philosophy in para 7.1: *‘Regular maintenance and repair are the key to the preservation of historic buildings. Modest expenditure on repairs keeps a building weathertight and routine maintenance (especially roof repairs and the regular clearance of gutters and downpipes) can prevent much more expensive work becoming necessary at a later date.*

Unfortunately regular maintenance and repair has not been carried out at 35 Sample Street in recent years and the new owners wish to undertake works to prevent further damage to the building.

Most of the proposals are for like-for-like replacement using materials to match existing and do not require Listed Building Consent.

In accordance with Annexe C of PPG15 'Guidance on Alterations to Listed Buildings' the proposed works are based on a proper understanding of the structure and the development of the building over the years. The most significant alterations involve the construction of the drive which is adjacent to the modern north extensions and alterations to the modern 1980s single storey extension.

Works in the original house are minor and fully reversible, for example the new stud partition in the main bedroom will not affect the existing wall or ceiling coverings and will be easily removable without causing damage should future owners wish to remove the partition.

Conclusion

The proposed repairs to 35 Sample Street are essential to protect against further damage to the building caused by defects including water penetration to original roof timbers and against further damage to the garage due to proximity to a tree.

These works will increase the life of the building and the new owners plan to continue regular maintenance during their occupation.

The proposed alterations are sympathetic to the building and will allow the continued enjoyment of the house, whilst respecting the special character of this Listed Building.

The driveway will match the existing boundary wall and the new gate and brick piers will be in keeping with the surrounding area. The alterations to the modern 1980s extension will not affect the special characteristics of this Listed Building.

The proposed works will be carried out to formal conservation standards and will be monitored throughout the project. Mr & Mrs Smith are keen to protect the harmony and character of the surrounding area and these works are intended to maintain the integrity of the Conservation Area whilst improving the amenities of the building to suit modern living.