

North Hertfordshire District Council

Building Conservation comments

File Ref: 24/02804/FPH & 24/02805/LBC

Date: 28/02/2025

Planning Officer: AH

Address: Bibbsworth Hall Farm, Bibbs Hall Lane, Kimpton, Herts SG4 8EN

Subject: See below.

- **24/02804/FPH** - Alterations to existing lean-to extension to include external cladding and insertion of door following removal of existing window, single storey rear glass garden room, Insertion of rear dormer window, replacement and additional rooflights to rear roofslope. Alterations to fenestration (as a variation of planning permission 23/00558/FPH granted 13.12.2023) (Development has commenced).
- **24/02805/LBC** - Alterations to existing lean-to extension to include external cladding and insertion of door following removal of existing window, single storey rear glass garden room, Insertion of rear dormer window, replacement and additional rooflights to rear roofslope. Alterations to fenestration and internal alterations (as a variation of listed building consent 23/00559/LBC granted 13.12.2023) (Development has commenced).

1.0 Recommendation

- 1.1 There are aspects of this proposal that are undesirable alterations that have already been carried out and a case could be made that their impact harms the special character that Bibbsworth Hall Farmhouse possesses. I have decided to hold back from offering a recommendation at this stage pending responses to the points raised. I may, however, subsequently be able to offer a **NO OBJECTION** recommendation.

2.0 The Local Plan and NPPF (Dec 2024)

- 2.1 Policy HE1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 - 2031 is relevant as are the following paragraphs of the NPPF:
- **135 c)** (sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment),
 - **207** (local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting)
 - **210** (desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness),
 - **212** (great weight should be given to the asset's conservation),
 - **213** (clear and convincing justification), and
 - **215** (harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use).

3.0 Context

- 3.1 Bibbsworth Hall Farm is grade II listed and is therefore a Designated Heritage Asset for the purpose of applying the aims of Section 16 of the NPPF. The building is described as:

Farmhouse. Mid C18. Timber-framed interior. Red brick casing, possibly of the mid C19. Hipped Plain tile roof. 5-window range with 1 window towards road. Plinth, floor band, angled brick eaves. C20 wooden casements. Centre of E elevation has a very good mid C18 doorcase: 4 fielded Panels, 2 glazed; moulded wood frame; architrave surround; carved consoles; pulvinated frieze; Pediment.



4.0 The Proposal

4.1 For ease of reference, the changes to the scheme (excluding the glazed garden room) are set out below.

23/00558/FPH & 23/00559/LBC

24/02804/FPH & 24/02805/LBC



Alterations to existing lean-to extension to include external cladding and insertion of door following removal of existing window.

- 4.2 The proposed or already undertaken works to the existing lean-to are considered more sympathetic to the host building when compared with the previously consented scheme and are unobjectionable.



Single storey rear glass garden room

- 4.3 Considering the submission under the following application references (yet to be determined) and that the works to the alternative garden room extension design have commenced, I am unsure as to why the glass garden room as previously granted forms part of this current proposal:

- **25/00153/FPH** - Alteration from glazed to solid roof to single storey rear garden room extension granted on planning permission 23/00558/FPH.
- **25/00154/LBC** - Alteration from glazed to solid roof to single storey rear garden room extension granted on planning permission 23/00559/LBC.

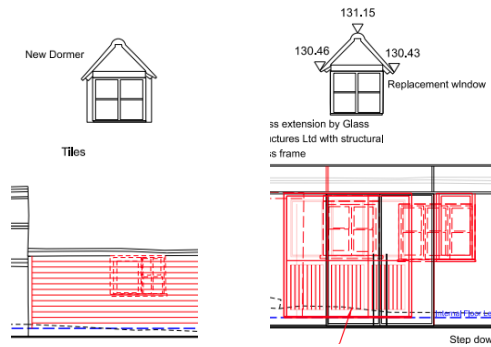
Insertion of rear dormer window.

- 4.4 Under appn refs: 23/00558/FPH & 23/00559/LBC I stated the following:

The dormer window in the north (side) elevation would match the existing dormer window in the south (side) elevation and is unobjectionable. My only comment is that both dormer windows could perhaps be improved by introducing a central, horizontal glazing bar to each casement, thus requiring the existing dormer window casements to be remade.



- 4.5 At my site visit on 11 February 2025 I noted that not only had the existing rear dormer already been removed but this, together with the new dormer on the north roof slope were in fact wider, with black framed casements, modern ironmongery and no central horizontal glazing bar (currently indicated on the submitted plans). The casements are 1100mm wide x 770mm tall as opposed to what is shown on the drawings as 950mm wide x 800mm tall. The installed windows therefore have more landscape proportions than what is shown on the drawings which is disappointing.



- 4.6 The dormer construction may not itself be so harmful as to merit an objection but the drawings should be revised to take account of the window proportions. However, the casements lack the quality required for this grade II listed building. What is sought is either single-glazed, traditionally puttied windows or slimlite double-glazed units that are externally compound putty glazed. Either version should ideally have white-painted timber units with appropriate ironmongery.

Replacement and additional rooflights to rear roofslope.

- 4.7 No objection.

Alterations to fenestration and internal alterations

- 4.8 Apart from my comments on the dormer windows and addressing the garden room under separate applications, generally, the works inspected both internally and externally were of a high standard and no objection is raised to changes either proposed or already made.



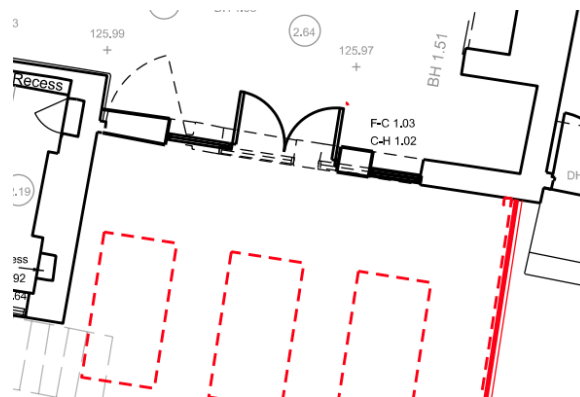
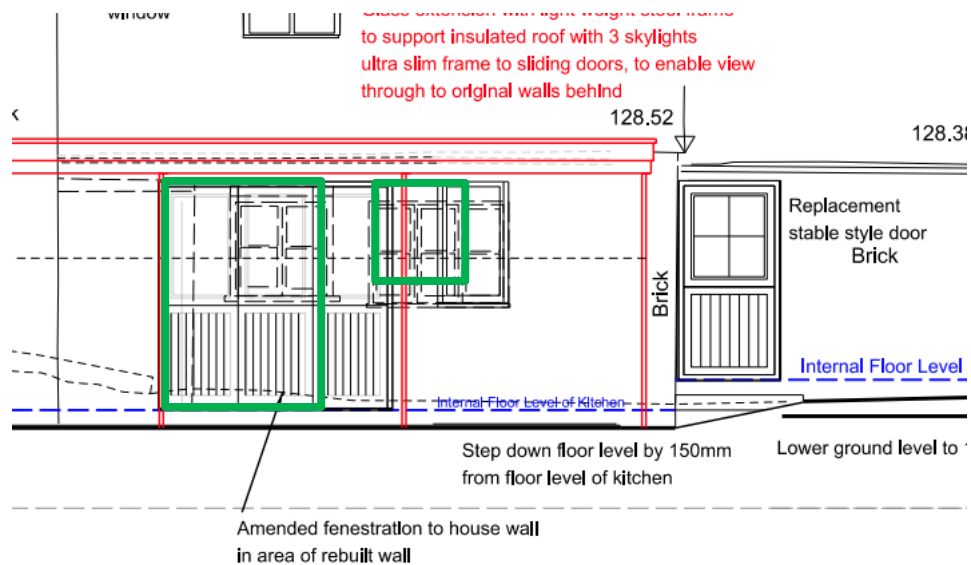
- 4.9 One significant alteration that has already been undertaken is to the south-facing wall/fenestration of the rear wing where two windows and an external door together with brickwork have been removed. I note the following in the submitted Planning and Heritage Statement:

The applicant found that the brickwork in the area of the original kitchen door was in very poor condition and not providing adequate support for the roof structure above, so the decision was made to increase the size of the pier, and reduce the number of openings to a larger door set and one single window. These will be external doors and windows leading to the glazed garden room, beyond.

In summary, the retention of the lean to, will be welcomed as it retains historic fabric, the minor modifications to the roof junction of the kitchen wing to the main house, reflect the detailing of the dormers, and the works to the kitchen wall enable a structural wall pier to support the roof above, while enabling the character of this element of the more modern service wing of the dwelling to be retained.



- 4.10 It is disappointing to see this work undertaken without prior discussion and, importantly, agreement from the LPA. Having said that and had this been so, I may have still considered a larger opening to potentially be a way forward if convincingly justified but I am unconvinced of the approach currently shown i.e. pair of half-glazed doors with a matching fixed panel to the side and a deep single casement with no glazing bar. Reinstating a pair of less deep casements with a single horizontal bar and reducing the main opening to a pair of part-glazed doors with may be only the lower third being a solid panel of the style shown would be a better outcome (green outline below). In my opinion, this aspect of the scheme has a mildly erosive quality, and further discussion should take place on this matter.



5.0 Suggested conditions

- 5.1 It is assumed that with works having already commenced that the standard time condition would not be imposed on these applications.
- 5.2 The question is whether the decision is taken to impose a condition requiring the replacement of the dormer casement windows. If so, then I suggest the following:
1. Joinery details incorporating a single, horizontal glazing bar for the double-casements in the two dormer windows on the rear wing and window ironmongery shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority within 3 months of the date of this decision notice.

Reason: To ensure that special regard is paid to protecting the special architectural and historic interest and integrity of the grade II listed building under Section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and Policy HE1 of the Local Plan and to ensure the development is carried out in accordance with details which form the basis of this grant of listed building consent and to address previously unauthorised works.

2. Within 6 months of the approval of Condition 1, the unauthorised, black-framed casements shall be removed and replaced with white-painted casements incorporating the approved joinery/ironmongery details of Condition 1.

Reason: To ensure that special regard is paid to protecting the special architectural and historic interest and integrity of the grade II listed building under Section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and Policy HE1 of the Local Plan and to ensure the development is carried out in accordance with details which form the basis of this grant of listed building consent and to address previously unauthorised works.

Mark Simmons
Senior Conservation Officer