



Re: Rectory Manor House - 32 Shillington Road - Log burner vent exemption (23/02224/GEN)

1 message

Mike Williams <[REDACTED]>
To: Mark Simmons <Mark.Simmons@north-herts.gov.uk>

Thu, 28 Sep 2023 at 11:54

Dear Mr Simmons,

Thank-you for your detailed response. I address the points that you raise in the same order as written as follows:

- I attach a photograph of the fireplace and surroundings. The opening is 141cm wide and 87cm in height at the middle. The hearth is 75cm deep from the inside of the stone lip at the front to the rear.
- The "carved chimney piece" as referred to in the listing details stands in front of a much larger original fireplace. The exterior base of the chimney stack is nearly 3m wide and you can see from inside the chimney that the void has not been bricked up. With the alterations made to the chimney stack over the centuries, the width of the flue reduces to approximately 25mm at a height of around 12m.
- From what I have read there would be very little difference in the burden of applying for Listed Building Consent compared with a Certificate of Lawfulness of Proposed Works, so I am open to the most practicable option. Historic England Advice Note 16 on Listed Building Consent states on page 51, item 42 that "Installing a wood burning stove is unlikely to affect special interest but installing the flue may need LBC as would the removal of a historic timber fire-surround, historic range or inset to make space or comply with safety regulations".
- I am only interested in embarking on this project if the installation is completely reversible and has no impact on the listed structure. I would also be overseeing the installation directly myself to ensure that this remains the case. Taking these factors into consideration (and the discussion on a flue, below) I assume that the LBC application would not require any more information and analysis than I am sharing, with full transparency, in our correspondence.
- The flue-system question is a critical one for me. While I have not yet determined which model of log burner to install and therefore identified what is recommended for that model, I have discussed the options with an authorised installer. Given the initial width and subsequent tapering of the chimney and in particular its height, he recommended that a liner is not used beyond the stove pipe. I understand from what I have read that there may be some compromise in performance but, provided the installed unit complies with safety requirements, it is a reasonable practical solution that maintains the listed structure.
- I will contact Hertfordshire Building Control in due course but I would like to reach an agreed position as best as possible with yourself beforehand, as I would expect them to refer to you where an exemption is requested in these circumstances.

Please let me know if there are any other questions or clarifications that I can help with or otherwise confirm that you have sufficient information, after which I will make the LBC application.

Kind regards,

Mike Williams

On Thu, 21 Sept 2023 at 16:22, Mark Simmons <Mark.Simmons@north-herts.gov.uk> wrote:

Dear Mr Williams,

Thank you for your email.

I note that you would like to install a log burner in the main lounge of your house. It would have been useful to have been reminded of the existing fireplace as it has been sometime since we last met on site.

I note that the log burner would fit within the existing fireplace, complying with regulations, with no need for any structural changes to be made and that a horizontal metal plate will need to be installed above the log burner within the chimney through which the flue will pass.

As you mention, Rectory Manor House (32 Shillington Road) is grade II* listed and is, therefore, amongst designated heritage assets of highest significance. For ease of reference, I have included the list entry below (which you are aware of):

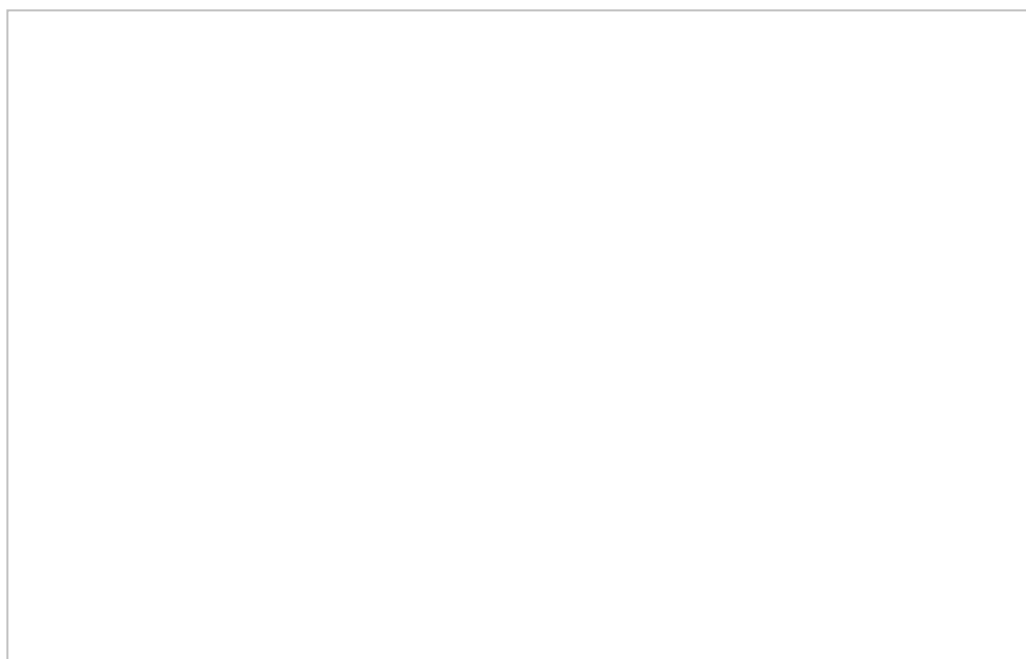
Manor house of Rectory Manor, now a farmhouse. Early C17, altered and brick faced in parts in C18. Alterations 1870-73. Panelling installed in 1930s from Hammonds Farmhouse at Burge End. Clunch and red brick with roughcast timber-framed gables. Steep old red tile roofs. A symmetrical, E-plan, formerly moated house of 2 1/2-storeys, set back beyond forecourt, facing S, with 2-storeys gabled porch and gabled projecting wings. Single-storey hipped C18 brewhouse extends to W and gabled roughcast timber framed stair turret projects at rear. 4 windows to each floor. 3- and 4-lights transomed flush casement windows. Arched brick opening to porch and original heavy studded door in cyma moulded frame, and panelling (reset). Door has bolts and bars and cannot be opened from outside. Central large C17 brick chimney with 5 diagonal square shafts in L-formation to give effect of 9 shafts when seen from front. External sidewall chimneys on outer side of each wing with diagonal shafts. 3-light transomed window to rear staircase, and blocked large 3-lights ovolo-moulded mullioned and transomed windows set on the tie-beams of the roughcast rear gables. Rear gable of W wing has a wide 4-lights pointed wooden Gothick traceried window with leaded glazing said to have come from the church in the Victorian period. Room in E wing lined with panelling from Hammonds Farm c.1931, and carved chimney-piece. Tunnel cut through central stack in 1870s. Former lobby entry with hall on E giving access to parlour in wing. Kitchen or houseplace on W side of stack gives access to divided longer W crosswing and brewhouse beyond. Study and staircase in projection to rear. Clasped-purlin roof to crosswings have collars supporting the single purlin in each slope. Main roof wider with 2 purlins to each slope, the upper clasped by a collar, the lower butt-jointed to the principals. Flat rafters jointed into lower purlin. Central chimney in English-bond.

There is a case to say that such an intervention would not necessarily affect the building's special character and in which case it may be argued that a Certificate of Lawfulness of Proposed Works to a Listed Building could be considered. On the other hand, this Authority has in the past invited/accepted applications for listed building consent for similar installations, so I advise that the LBC route would be best followed here.

Just out of interest what would be the proposed flue system? Would it be a twin-walled flexi liner system?

I cannot offer an exemption from the requirement to form an air vent, but I assume that what you might be after is a relaxation of the Building Regs, in which case, I advise that you contact Hertfordshire Building Control.

I do, however, concur with your comments that considering that the room is fitted with both smoke and carbon monoxide mains alarms with battery back-up and taking into account the thickness and composition of the walls, combined with the wall-to-wall oak panelling, it is likely to be neither be practical nor sympathetic to the listed building to create an air vent but I would need to images of the room before confirming this.



Regards

Mark

From: Mike Williams <[REDACTED]>
Sent: 07 September 2023 11:07
To: Mark Simmons <Mark.Simmons@north-herts.gov.uk>
Subject: Rectory Manor House - 32 Shillington Road - Log burner vent exemption

Dear Mr Simmonds,

I would like to install an log burner in the main lounge (room 2 on the attached ground floor plan). I have discussed the matter with an authorised installer and note the following points:

- The log burner would fit within the existing fire place, complying with regulations, with no need for any structural changes to be made.
- A horizontal metal plate will need to be installed above the log burner within the chimney through which the flue will pass. This can rest on the slope at the back of the chimney but will require a horizontal bracket located on the wall of the front of the chimney to rest on. This will not be visible from inside room and will only require two screw fixings.
- The fireplace has been in use in the winter for a number of years, but a log burner would be much more efficient and environmentally friendly.
- The room is fitted with both smoke and carbon monoxide mains alarms with battery back-up.
- The property is grade II* listed.

However, because of the thickness and composition of the walls, combined with the wall to wall oak paneling, it would neither be practical nor sympathetic to the listed building to create an air vent. I am therefore writing to request an exemption from this requirement.

The room is c.5m x 6m and the windows are single glazed. In addition to air flow from fire places in each room, there are the usual drafts in this old building from single glazed windows and original doors, and there is also under floor ventilation from room 1. Combined with the volume of air space in this large house these features already provide more ventilation than a vent would provide in a more modern home.

Should you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me either by email or at the contact point below.

Yours sincerely,

Mike Williams,
Rectory Manor House
32 Shillington Road,
Pirton
Herts SG5 3QL
mobile: [REDACTED]

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