



Heritage Impact Statement

Proposed Internal Shower Room & Stairlift Installation

(Grade II Listed Building) TITHE FARM, ST ALBANS ROAD, CODICOTE HERTFORDSHIRE SG4 8UT

List Entry No 1102832

Listing NGR TL2159318139

TL 2118 CODICOTE BAKERS LANE (east side) – 10/3 Tithe Farmhouse (formerly listed under 15.3.74 St Albans Road)

Date Listed: 15-Mar-1974

1. Introduction

This Heritage Impact Statement has been prepared in support of an application for Listed Building Consent for the proposed creation of a new internal shower room and the installation of a stairlift within a Grade II listed building.

The statement assesses the significance of the heritage asset, describes the proposed works, and evaluates their impact on the building's historic fabric, character, and setting, in accordance with the principles outlined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and relevant local planning policy.

2. Significance of the Heritage Asset

The property is a Grade II listed building, recognised for its special architectural and historic interest. Its significance derives from:

Architectural Interest

- A house, formerly a farmhouse, mainly mid 18th century with a late 19th century glazing-bar casement in former 3-window front, 1970s front door and gabled attic dormers. Historic construction methods and materials typical of its periods, including Brick coped gable-end, parapets with internal chimney stacks, shaped corbels and attic floor bands, rubbed brick front floor band, moulded wooden eaves cornice.
- The features listed in the Listing entry are all external and do not include any features on the left flank wall at the location of the soil pipe affected by the proposed change.

Historic Interest

- The building illustrates external features of its time and contributes to an understanding of the local area's architectural evolution.
- Its continued use as a dwelling preserves its original functional character.

3. Description of Proposed Works

3.1 Creation of New Internal Shower Room

- The shower room is proposed to be formed within an existing bedroom/ancillary space on the first floor, expanding the current opening to a cupboard in the side wall, with a small stud wall added to allow the bedroom to continue to be used independently, providing access to the step-free shower room and toilet from the master suite opposite. It is not possible to create an en-suite to the master suite as the soil stack connection must be on the left-hand flank wall to preserve the historic features of the building.
- Works include installation of lightweight stud partitioning, sanitaryware (shower, toilet, basin), plumbing, ventilation, and waterproof finishes.
- No historic fabric (e.g., original plasterwork, panelling, structural timbers) will be removed or altered without agreement and minimal intervention.
- All works are designed to be **fully reversible**, ensuring the room can be reinstated to its original configuration in the future.

3.2 Installation of Stairlift

- A stairlift is proposed on the existing staircase to improve accessibility to the first floor bedrooms and new shower room to allow the occupants to continue to live at the property despite mobility issues.

- The installation will use a **track fixed to the stair treads**, avoiding attachment to balusters or handrails to prevent damage to historic joinery.
 - The only alteration required is the increased door height as shown on the sketches attached, as the limited-height door frame does not permit the required angle of the stair-lift ascent, as per the information provided by Stannah. This can be very simply achieved, as per the drawings, and will have very minimal impact to the internal room.
 - Any required fixings for the stairlift will be minimal and reversible.
 - The stairlift motor and rail have been selected for discreet visual impact, ensuring no permanent change to the staircase's appearance.
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4. Assessment of Impact on Heritage Significance

4.1 Impact of Shower Room

- The proposal will not see any changes to the elevation of the building nor to any other external elevations, and the only work which will have a measurable impact on the historic fabric is the raising of an internal door frame at ground floor level and the widening of the cupboard door in the bedroom, as noted in the pre-application assessment completed by Tricia Craggs on 23.02.26 which had a positive response
- The upstairs works occur **entirely within an existing room**, preserving the historic layout of the principal spaces.
- Lightweight stud partitions avoid cutting into historic structural elements and do not alter the overall planform.
- Plumbing routes will follow existing voids or modern interventions to avoid damage to original fabric.
- The reversibility of the installation ensures **no long-term harm** to the building's significance.

Overall Impact: *Less than substantial harm (low level), mitigated through careful design and reversibility.*

4.2 Impact of Stairlift

- The stairlift involves **no alteration** to the staircase form, balustrades, or handrails, only the extension of height on the door frame as necessitated by the ascent angle of the stair-lift.
- Fixings are limited to the stair treads and can be removed without lasting impact.
- The visual presence of the stairlift does not obscure or permanently affect the appreciation of the staircase as a heritage feature.

Overall Impact: *Negligible to low-level harm, fully reversible.*

5. Justification for the Works

The proposed works are necessary to improve the building's **long-term sustainable use** by:

- Providing modern sanitary facilities in a way that respects the building's historic fabric.
- Ensuring the house remains **accessible**, supporting inclusive use for current and future occupants.
- Avoiding alterations to the building's external appearance or its primary architectural features.
- Enhancing the property through minor development which sustain its historic fabric and ensures its conservation and continued use as a significant heritage dwelling

The NPPF encourages proposals that sustain heritage assets through viable and sympathetic use. The low-impact and reversible nature of the works is fully aligned with these principles.

6. Mitigation Measures

To ensure protection of historic fabric, the following measures will be taken:

- Use of breathable materials and moisture management to avoid condensation or damp.
 - Minimising fixings and avoiding historic surfaces wherever possible.
 - Ensuring all new plumbing is isolated from original timbers to prevent water ingress risks.
 - Ensuring the stairlift can be removed without residual damage.
 - Retaining all removed historic elements (if any) on site for future reinstatement.
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7. Conclusion

The proposed en-suite and stairlift installation have been carefully designed to respect the character, layout, and fabric of this Grade II listed building. The interventions are modest, fully reversible, and do not involve the loss of historic material in key areas of the building. Any harm to the heritage significance is minimal and is clearly outweighed by the public benefit of maintaining the building's continued and accessible residential use.

The proposal therefore meets national and local heritage policy requirements and is considered acceptable in heritage terms.