SUN HILL COTTAGE, ROYSTON : WORKS TO SMALL BARN

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

N.H.D.C.
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GENERAL BACKGROUND

Sun Hill Cottage, at 3 Sun Hill, is a Grade II Listed Building in the old town of Royston.
It is a two storey house with a basement.
A plaque on the front roof gablet shows a date of 1767, but this is believed to refer to an extension, and the main house is thought to be older.

Sun Hill Cottage is located where the High Street, London Road and Upper King Street converge.
It was previously a Public House called The Sun, and Sun Hill road forms the southern boundary to the site.

There is a flint barn at the bottom of the garden on Sun Hill, which according to old Deeds states its' use as for 'tenant stabling'.
The flint barn has been used as a store for at least 45+ years, and is the subject of this application for building works.

PLANNING USE

Sun Hill Cottage is designated as Residential planning use, and is in a Conservation Area.
The Barn is incidental to this existing residential use.

The property was given a Grade II Listing on 11th June 1976, the same date as many other buildings in the close vicinity.

EXISTING HOUSE (Sun Hill Cottage)

The main structure is formed of five oak frames, with oak beams and framing.
External walls are generally rendered, with the exception of the front brick facade which was added in the Victorian era.
There are two chimneys, built in red brickwork.

The roof is pitched, and tiled with clay plain tiles.
The neighbouring properties of a similar age also have clay plain tile roofs.
The roof has three lead-roofed box dormers to the front elevation.

EXISTING BARN (The Works)

The walls are constructed in knapped flint, with some internal areas of clunch chalk walling.
Some areas of flint have deteriorated, and have been patched with brickwork and mortar, but these will be renovated as part of the new works.

The corners to walls and door/window reveals are finished with red brick detailing.
Each gable has a brick formed circular opening, for ventilation when the barn was used as stables.
These openings have been temporarily bricked up with common bricks, and boarding.

The barn is roofed in asbestos corrugated roof sheeting, which we do not consider appropriate or original for the age of the building.
The re-roofing predates the 1976 Listing.
Although the barn is reasonably dry, there are some holes in the roofing.

There are timber boarded barn doors and a glazed window, which are of low quality and not original.
The floor is a concrete ground bearing floor slab.

THE PROPOSED BARN WORKS

We wish to make better use of the Barn, which is only suitable for storage purposes in its' current form.
This will involve converting the barn for a more general usage, such as a home office, or a granny annex to provide additional living space.

The existing asbestos sheet roof will be removed and replaced with a new roof with plain tiles to match the main house and neighbouring buildings in the area.
Velux type roof lights, with dark coloured frames, will be installed in the new roof, as these are relatively inconspicuous.

The existing building footprint will not be increased, however attic space will be created in the new roof, making efficient use of the volume.

An oak structural frame, with four posts, beams and purlins will support the roof and attic floor.

The barn doors and window will be replaced with a double glazed dark stained hardwood window screen.

Internally, the flint wall finish will remain, but be faced with insulation and plasterboard dry walling.

JUSTIFICATION FOR THE WORK

The Barn has become unloved over the years, and renovation would visually improve it and the local built environment.
The renovation will arrest its' deterioration, and preserve it for many years to come, so that it will continue as a part of our heritage.

By generating sufficient usable space in the Barn, we can justify the cost of the works involved.

We have five children who live in the Royston area, and with a growing number of grand-children we require more family space.

The asbestos corrugated sheet roofing is an industrial material, is not original to the building and detracts from the appearance of the flint barn.
The general public will potentially benefit from the roof replacement.

Sun Hill Cottage and a large proportion of its' neighbouring properties have plain tiled roofs, and we wish to match these.
The required change of roof pitch will hardly be noticeable, as can be seen on drawing number 1703/02.

DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The design will respect the existing barn's scale and materials, with the exception of the corrugated roof.
The Barn's setting and layout will remain unchanged, while its' appearance will be improved using traditional materials.

The floor and roof loads are to be supported by a structural frame.
Some loads will be applied to the external walls, but these will be minimal.

We wish to use oak for the main frame components, to reflect the oak structure of Sun Hill Cottage.
This will add character and raise the quality level of the finished building.

The efficient use of a building's volume is an essential part of sustainable design, and attic space will be incorporated accordingly.
Velux type roof lights will provide daylight to attic rooms while maintaining a low visual impact to the roof.

Privacy for neighbouring properties is to be considered and maintained.
For this reason, roof lights are to face towards Sun Hill Cottage, or be at high level and with obscured glazing.
And, to maintain privacy to the house at the west of the site, the rear window opening will be closed off with glass blocks which provide obscured natural light, without transparency.

Any adjustments to the external walls will be in flint and red brick to match and blend in with the existing facade.

VEHICULAR ACCESS

Vehicular access to Sun Hill Cottage is from Sun Hill, and there is a paved drive providing parking spaces for two or three cars.
The Barn has its' own separate access from Sun Hill via double gates which lead to a concrete paved drive, providing parking spaces for two cars.
There are no proposed changes to either of these vehicular accesses.
Two public car parks are within 100m of the property.

PEDESTRIAN ACCESS

The main pedestrian access to the house is at the front of Sun Hill Cottage, either by the front door or the side gate leading to the garden and the Barn at the rear.
Direct access to the barn is also available from Sun Hill, via the existing double gates.
There are no proposed changes to these accesses.
Royston Bus Station is 60m from the property, and Royston Rail Station is approximately 1Km from the property.

DISABLED ACCESS

Level access to the Barn for wheelchair users, and persons of reduced mobility (PRM) is achievable via the door on the north elevation.

EFFECT ON ADJACENT PROPERTIES

We do not wish the works to adversely affect our neighbours, and have considered this in our design.
Building works to the boundary will be minimal, and apart from a replacement roof, the remainder of the works are internal.

There will be no meaningful loss of daylight or sunlight, because of the distance from the barn to adjacent properties.

While there is no 'right to a view' (except where Covenants exist) any existing views will remain.
Privacy will be maintained as stated in the Design Principles section above.

SERVICES

The existing roof has gutters to both eaves, connected to two separate rainwater pipes on the north elevation.
These connect to an existing combined sewer. This drainage system will be re-used for the new roof.

New Foul drainage will be required for the Barn, and there are two alternative drainage routes.
The preferred new route will connect to an existing Foul Drainage manhole at the back of the main house.
Because of the gradient on Sun Hill there is an ample difference in levels for the drainage backfall.

There is an existing electrical supply to the barn from the main house.

SUMMARY

The existing barn would benefit from renovation to conserve the building, and create flexible accommodation.
This would be a positive improvement on the current status, making better and more productive use of our existing building stock.

By renovating the barn to the proposed design, it will be given a new future, extending its' useful lifespan. The finished works will improve what is currently a fairly nondescript secondary building by introducing architect designed features and materials.