

Supporting Planning Statement

72 Tilehouse Street
Hitchin
Hertfordshire
SG5 2DY



Introduction

The property is situated in the town of Hitchin which lies in the North East of the county of Hertfordshire, the property is a Grade II listed property in a Conservation Area. Tilehouse Street runs along the edge of the town of Hitchin and is accessed from the old original cobble high street which runs through the market in Hitchin. The house is terraced and lies towards the top end of Tilehouse Street on the east side going away from the town centre area. The front of the property has no kerb and the front door is accessed straight off the public footpath with one ground floor window in the same face. The property has an existing basement with a window which sits just above pavement level on the front face. The property has a further one window at first floor looking out onto the street, this window is to the first floor front bedroom. The windows on the front face are original in style, ie timber sashes with vertical georgian bars on the outside, but have been updated to a double glazed unit to ground floor and original single glazed timber to first floor. The front door is a painted timber door with a 4 panel inset detail and painted stone surround. The facing brickwork to the front face has been painted white with the neighbours either side still having the original facing brick exposed. The roof tiles are original clay tiles to the front and rear slopes. To the rear of the property there is a gothic style end to the conservatory, the material is timber single glazed with the roof being replaced in about the 1980's, there is a single storey link with felt roof over between the conservatory and back of the main house with a small courtyard behind the conservatory, this courtyard is where the window to the back of the basement comes out. There is a small walled in private garden with a door access to the rear of the garden which leads to a single garage. In the converted loft there is a small box dormer, a quarter of the way up the rear main roof slope with a lead flat roof and original timber casement window and render finish to the face cheeks of the box dormer. The first floor to the rear has a window at ground floor and one window to the first floor, the first floor window is timber casement windows with georgian horizontal bars and the ground floor is timber sash with vertical bars, similar to the front windows.

Within the road the row of terraced houses around our property have had no additions or changes made from the original design, to the rear of the property there is a wide range of different extensions to the rears of the terraced houses, conservatories erected with different materials to the walls and roofs, different style and materials used for windows, the main house rear façades seem to have remained constant through all the terraced houses. The rear loft dormers are similar in sizing, but have all been upgraded at different periods, with changes in some of the materials to from the original, setting a precedent for the rear of the terraced properties

Explanation of proposed, background or site History

The proposed scheme which is being applied for is for the refurbishment of the basement to create a safer stair access to it and to create a bedroom for guests. On the rear conservatory to replace the roof glazing to double glazed units with modern more efficient glazing. The single storey infill between the house and conservatory to have its roof replaced with a new GRP resin flat roof and insertion of a rooflight in this new roof. In the loft to replace the box dormer with more efficient materials to the face cheeks and replace the old

single glazed window for new timber double glazed windows to match the existing style and then a GRP resin flat roof over.

Tilehouse Street can be dated back to as early as 1317 at the time of the founding of the Priory, Tilehouse Street & Bridge Street were extended along the town and at a later date extended to Queens Street. Properties in Tilehouse Street have properties which can be dated back to the early part of the 17th century but have been altered over the centuries to what they are today. The building which was known as "*The Three Tuns Inn*" which is now residential properties with some of the original front facade features still in place, like the usual archway leading into a yard still stands. Further up the road is a property of a similar date which still contains some of the original paneling to the front façade. Further up the road heading away from the town centre is the "*Coopers Arms Inn*", which is believed to have been the "*Tilers Gild Hall*", this build is built out of stone with tiled roof and dates back to the middle of the 15th Century and was originally of the courtyard type, but only two wings remain of the original building. One wings front façade has an opened timbered roof with two of the trusses still intact, but an additional storey has been later added in about the 17th Century and hangs out over into the street, again there is the familiar archway from the street to the yard behind.

At the top end of Tilehouse, on the side which this property is situated, was the old "*Free School*" which is now a dwelling and was built about 1650, but has been altered over the centuries to what it is today. It was a brick built structure to the ground floor with exposed timber tudor and render to the first floor, which is still its current façade today.



Identify context & need of proposed & justification

The current property layout has a tanked and insulated basement, but the stairs to it are not safe, the basement has a front window which comes out at pavement level and the rear window comes out into a small courtyard between the main house and rear conservatory. On the ground floor level there is one room as you come in the front door which is used as a living room, there is a window to the front and rear of the room. At the back of the room there is a doorway which leads to a passageway with a door on one side which goes into the small courtyard the other side has a door which leads to a small storage room which has an old flat felt roof on it, from this passageway it leads to the conservatory which is the kitchen/diner area. At first floor there is a bedroom to the front of the property which looks out onto the street, towards the back is the family bathroom and staircase leading to the loft. The loft comprises of a single bedroom with a small box dormer to the rear.

The proposed scheme is for the stairs to the basement to be remove and relocated, the new staircase will be compliant as well as being enclosed for Fire Regulations, the basement is proposed to have bedroom and open up landing area. At ground floor level the conservatory roof is to be replaced with more modern glazing and the single storey structures roof is to be replaced with a new GRP resin roof and a rooflight inserted, this storage area is to become a WC/Utility room. The loft rear box dormer is to be replaced. There is no proposal to extend the property in any way, all works are not intrusive or changing of the original style of the property.

Overview of how proposed complies or fits in with local council planning guide

The proposed property is a Grade II listed building in a Conservation Area. Under current planning regulations/guidelines Grade II buildings are protected in such to protect their historical and architectural significance, most listed buildings are of special interest and so therefore extensions and alterations, all building works need prior written consent from the relevant authorities before works can be carried out. By having this in place it ensures the protection of the regional unique character features of the heritage of the property. This prior written consent is also needed should you wish to change the materials of the property as any changes could de-track from the original character of the property. Failure to seek prior written consent to carry out works on a listed property is a criminal offence which could incur serious penalties, but if works have already commenced a listed building enforcement notice may be issued, this notice allows the authorities to either reverse the alterations/changes or to reduce the impact the changes have on the heritage of the property by swapping out certain materials or finishes for other more desirable ones which are more in-keeping with the architectural heritage of the listed property, but this may still carry a fine. Retrospective listed building consent can be applied for, but it may be denied and the works will need to be restored back to its original.

With all this being said, the proposed works being applied for under this application are all internal changes, so there is no impact on the external visual look of the current property. Most of the proposed works work within the building, ie new staircase to basement and division of the basement room. The conservatory is proposed to have a new roof installed as the current roof

glazing has failed, the proposed will look similar to the existing. The rear existing box dormer to the loft will be refurbished and raised up to current building regulation standards while still maintaining the original look of the existing dormer.

We believe that the proposed works will have little no impact on the original architectural heritage of the Grade II listed property and so fall within the current planning guidelines/regulations of works to a Grade II listed property.

Conclusion

The design and layout of the proposed alteration works are not to extend the property in any way, but rather make alterations within it walls, and the external replacements are only to bring materials up to current building regulation standards while still maintaining the heritage of the building, also these works are on the rear of the property and have less of an impact on the street scene or front façade therefore maintaining the properties architectural heritage.

We feel this application to be a wholly appropriate proposal and consideration has been taken into account of its surroundings.