

OW/3597/02

Monday 10th August 2020

Planning Service
Development & Planning Authority
Sir Charles Frossard House
La Charroterie
St. Peter Port
GY1 1FH

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: **Planning Application– Erect extension to La Fosse, Rue de Quanteraine, St. Peters for Mr & Mrs. Westgarth-Smith (Protected Building: PB1390)**

I am pleased to enclose a Planning Application with respect to the above. The documents comprise electronic copies of the following: the application form, a Statement of Significance, survey drawings, the Block & Location Plan, scheme drawings & photomontages.

Background

The property is located on Rue de Quanteraine, St. Peters, and lies within an Agriculture Priority Area but not a Conservation Area. The building, which is Protected, is a traditional granite cottage arranged over 3 floors, on quite steeply sloping terrain. The main entrance is to the East elevation, from which side the split elevation of the property is most apparent. Towards the North elevation is a small patio, with steps leading to attractive terraced gardens both above and below. The West face of the property is bordered by dense vegetation, while the South-facing gable is directly on Rue de Quanteraine. The rural site is densely vegetated with mature trees and hedging, sheltering most aspects of the property from public view. As the site is within the Quanteraine valley, there is quite an extreme topographical incline, meaning La Fosse is overlooked to the South by a large container-type property which sits on higher ground. Besides this, there is no other direct overlooking.

Property History

The C17th cottage was extended in 1994 by CCD Architects, when the single-story, pitched-roof Master bedroom extension was added on the lower ground floor. Substantial renovations were also made to the main building both internally and externally. These works included construction of basement retaining walls, re-roofing and rebuilding of chimney stacks, the addition of 3 dormer windows to the east-facing slope, new T&G internal partitions and rebuilding of the staircase, new flooring etc. As such, although Listed, there is little internal fabric of historic note beyond the furze oven, fireplace and overall proportions of the spaces. As summarised in the Development & Planning Authority's own records, the main value of the property is in its external appearance and setting, and in particular the relationship of the stepped front elevation with the roadside retaining wall. The split elevation of the East frontage is also a key attribute to the charm of the property.

A full description of the Property's history and significance is detailed in the accompanying Design & Significance Statement.

Proposals

Our proposals seek to provide a much needed 'core' family space to the existing cottage's cramped and dark living conditions, improving the space, layout and circulation. They also seek to open up attractive views and connections to the landscape and external environment, improving our client's health and wellbeing. As a young family, they are hoping to enhance this Protected building by extending it to a more appropriate size for the site, and for the future, via a considered and high quality architectural project.

In summary, our proposals comprise:

- Forming a vaulted bedroom/shower room extension above the existing lower ground floor 'master bedroom', necessitating a raising of the modern roof structure and raising of cavity granite wall head (extension built 1994), both of which will match the existing in appearance and proportion almost exactly;
- Creating a kitchen extension to the lower ground floor, fully glazed to open up views to the gardens and allow parents to monitor children playing on all terraces, but all screened from public view by a tall granite wall with doorway. The kitchen in this location will benefit from both morning Eastern and evening Western light, and enable the re-laying out of the utility & pantry within easy reach. This will be high quality, contemporary design, concealed from the public realm;
- Forming a 2 storey pitched-roof building of identical level, height and width to the main building, housing a master bedroom suite on the 1st floor, and, on the ground floor, 2 living spaces (sitting/dining room & study/playroom) with WC and storage, and connecting directly onto a new garden terrace;
- Forming new garden terraces, at a lower level than current lawn to suit the new building levels, and provide safe enclosed play space for young children visible from the kitchen area.

Our proposals, when viewed from the East (front) elevation, reflect the terracing of the landscape down the valley to the North-East, already present in the form of the stepped roofline of the existing cottage, road line, boundary walls and existing terraces. By increasing the height of the existing 1990s extension to 2 floors (whilst remaining significantly subservient to the main cottage), and introducing a single-story projection to the Northern end of the block, we are following the topography and reinforcing the appearance of the cottage as an extension of the terrain, without in any way diminishing the important split-level frontage. This has proved extremely challenging, ensuring sufficient internal headroom while providing an adequate connection from the terrace to the garden.

GP5: Protected Buildings

Only very minor works are proposed to the existing historic cottage, which, despite lacking significant historic internal features to protect, we propose to retain entirely. No part of the historic building will be demolished, and slates from the 1994 extension will be saved and reused in the new, raised roof. Raising of walls to the existing 1994 extension will also be undertaken in a carefully-controlled rubble granite to match the existing exactly.

3 minor alterations will be required to form single doorway openings to connect into the new additions, as indicated on drawings CCD-3597-SK02C, SK03C + SK04C. These alterations are:

- To form a new door opening within the North gable of the existing cottage at upper ground floor level, to connect into the new bedroom & shower room from the sitting room;
- To form a new door opening on the Western lower ground floor to connect through the rear retaining wall from boot-room area to new living spaces;
- To open up the existing window in the current stairwell, to form a walkway connecting the staircase/hall area to the rear extension at first floor level, and block up the lower portion of the window.

In addition, a minimally-framed strip of glazing is proposed across the rear of the main building just below eaves level to connect the historic cottage to the new extension. This 1-metre-wide rooflight will draw light into the new living/dining spaces below, which will be directly against the external wall of the original cottage, and create a lightweight physical link between old and new.

The main pitched-roof extension is designed to match the proportions of the existing granite gables exactly, as viewed from Rue de Quanteraine on the South elevation, with equal eave and ridge heights. In light of the feedback from our Pre-application Enquiry, we have reduced the length and therefore mass of this extension, so it becomes more subservient to the main cottage. We have also altered the orientation of the lower ground floor kitchen so it no longer projects as far from the main cottage, instead wrapping around and linking the two buildings more comfortably. Finally, we explored the possibility of dropping the ridge height at length, but found that the internal floor-ceiling heights were already pinched as a result of the sloping terrain, and that 'sinking' the building any lower would result in too extreme a height differential between the ground floor/terrace and the garden.

With this in mind, we have tried to diminish the appearance and size of the gable from the roadside by recessing the extension 3m from the road, and using a dark and unassuming/inconspicuous cladding material. Additionally, the lack of chimney stacks on the extension works to minimize the overall mass of the building when viewed from the public realm.

GP8: Design

The extension works comprise 3 elements which are a composition of parts, in much the same way as historic farmsteads and rural properties have developed over the centuries. Each is carefully suited to its own specific setting & orientation, each unique, but interlinking and forming a distinct part of the same whole. These elements have been carefully crafted and the design labored over, in order to balance the requirement for sufficient headroom with the need to connect the building externally to the gardens on both sides. The scheme we have developed is a finely resolved solution, with levels and head-heights calculated precisely and very little tolerance for dimensional design alterations.

The kitchen extension (1) is a modernist glass box, hidden from public view by a perpendicular granite wall but embracing the lush nature around the property and the steep slopes. It allows views to children playing on the immediate Kitchen patio or the larger Western patio, and links aesthetically externally, bringing the 'box' around the corner and notching into (2), the main rear (Western) extension. This takes a vernacular form, moving more toward an 'agricultural' aesthetic, in-keeping but subservient to the main dwelling, subtle, but unapologetic and clearly 'new' in its materiality and detailing.

- (1) The kitchen extension is designed as a 'glass-box pavilion', projecting partly over the valley, with a small balcony that allows the family to enjoy views from both inside and out, from 'within the trees'. Functionally, this will allow parents in the kitchen to monitor children playing in either the Eastern or Western gardens, which was a key element of the design brief. Aesthetically, the box will offer an appropriate link between the historic cottage and the larger rear extension; the breakfast area enclosed by large sections of glass, crisply set within a structure formed of corrugated metal cladding (floor and roof planes) to co-ordinate with the two-storey extension, while the walling in the kitchen area will be granite-clad to reference the historic cottage. The box continues the topographical 'rhythm' of the property and the greater setting, stepping down the site from neighbouring house above to pond at the bottom of steep valley.

The new granite wall acts as a bookend, enclosing the picturesque front elevation and demarcating the line between 'old' and 'new', whilst partially screening the contemporary extension beyond. It should be noted the wall is not designed to reach full eaves height, but to run somewhat below this so there is a suggestion of further construction beyond what is 'available' to the public. The wall also provides privacy to a domestic living area for the young family, so they won't be overlooked by pedestrian/vehicular traffic, and creates visual interest from both sides. Built in an attractive granite that will match the cottage, it is suggestive of historic country garden walls and will helpfully separate our clients' gardens between that which is public and private (the private only ever being glimpsed through the doorway or over the wall).

- (2) The main 2 story extension takes a more modest aesthetic approach, mirroring the volume of the existing cottage in its level, height, gable pitch and overall width. The chimney stacks are omitted to provide a subservient aesthetic, and detailing will be simple but crisp. The building will represent a modern rendering of a rustic/agricultural form; as such, materials have been selected to juxtapose the existing cottage, making clear the fact that the extension is new but also offering a palette that is sensitive to the existing and which will age naturally into the setting. Corrugated metal wall cladding and matching roof panels echo the agricultural structures and outbuildings of the local area, rendered in a contemporary manner. The use of a single dark colour on both roof and walls helps to unite the extension visually as single mass, while diminishing the visual impact of the building, and symbolically to act as a 'shadow' to the historic cottage.

A glazed skylight the length of the two main masses will separate this new extension from the old, and introduce much needed light into the depths of the floor plan. A frameless glass link at first floor level is an inconspicuous addition that enables retention of the existing staircase and cannot be viewed from the public realm.

Each new element has been carefully considered to both frame and harmonise with the existing listed building and its setting, whilst, viewed as a whole, also providing a single high calibre bespoke piece of architecture which will enhance the life and wellbeing of the owners and, we feel, the area.

GP13: Householder Development

Accommodation is currently provided for 1 double bedroom and 2 very small single children's loft bedrooms, a very small kitchen and small sitting room. There is a lower ground floor bathroom and utility room. There is presently no real space for dining and the upper rooms are all within the roofspace, with headroom severely restricted. The master bedroom, on the lower ground floor, is 2

floors away from the young children's bedrooms and is very dark due to its semi-retaining position and shortage of windows.

Our proposals will provide much improved living spaces over the cramped and dark existing rooms. The extension will create an open living/dining/kitchen space with greater headroom and access to natural light, with direct access onto a garden terrace. This will provide a significantly better quality internal space than the family have at present, hopefully working to boost the health of its occupants. The smaller cottage rooms will become sitting/play rooms, suitable to their size, and the upstairs bedrooms will be retained. Greater accommodation is designed for, with additional bedrooms and bathrooms to cater for the growing family. New bedrooms will offer greater headroom and impressive views over the lush landscape, all mostly on the same level so parents will not be far from their children's bedrooms.



View 1 - Entrance to drive

Viewed from the West (rear), the nature of the sloping ground means the main pitched-roof extension will appear much smaller than to the front (East) elevation where it is set down into the garden.



View 2 - East elevation (from road)

In practice, much of our clients' land is screened entirely from public view by dense, long established, ever-green hedging and trees, both on the roadside and within our clients' property, meaning the development will have a minimal impact on its immediate surroundings. The extension to the North will be barely visible from the road (see Photomontage 1 + 2) and only observable when viewed at an acute angle (see Photomontage 3).



View 3 - East elevation (acute)

The extension to the West will also be screened by the existing and established evergreen hedging on the roadside (Photomontage 4) and can only be glimpsed through a break in the roadside hedging (Photomontage 5), all of which is on our client's property. It is worth noting that, as a result of the valley's slope, La Fosse is overlooked on higher ground by residential properties to the South (one of which is seen in Photomontage 5), separated by hedging. La Fosse does not directly overlook any properties itself.



View 4 - South elevation (from road)

In fact it is our client's intention to fill the small hole in the current hedging in this area, which was caused by a large fallen tree damaging the bank in this location some years ago. Once this is filled there will be no public realm views onto the site from this side at all.

This is clarified for reference but has no impact on the quality of the design, which, even if the established vegetation were to be entirely removed, would be appropriate to the building and setting in its massing and quality.



View 5 - West elevation (from road, through hedging)

The proposals create a more appropriate and usable family home for the scale of the site and we feel comply very much with the homeowner's reasonable expectations.

Conclusion

We feel this is an exciting opportunity to expand and upgrade a charming and characterful piece of Guernsey's building heritage, sensitively and with a high quality architectural project aligned with good conservation principles.

When considered in terms of its impact on neighbouring dwellings, we believe there are no adverse effects on the amenities of the surrounding properties; the design, scale, mass and form of the proposed extensions have been carefully considered to respect the rural nature of the surroundings, and, given the density of mature vegetation surrounding the site on all sides, would not detract from the open character of the landscape.

The area is not a Conservation Area, and we feel the proposals would not adversely affect the special interest of the Protected Building as no part of the historic cottage is being demolished and only minimal alterations are proposed. Most development is away from the roadside and public realm.

The extensions have been designed to create subservient forms and have a sympathetic material palette to the existing property which, as mentioned above, does not currently provide adequate accommodation for a growing family.

The proposals would improve the health and well-being of the occupiers by providing improved daylight, circulation, head-height and ease of access to the open gardens. The increase in accommodation provides flexible spaces that will allow the family to grow over time, and ensure the needs of the family are catered for as they change over time.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you require any further information or wish to discuss it in more detail.

Yours faithfully,



Oliver Westgarth RIBA

Design Director & Chartered Architect

For and on behalf of CCD Architects

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Drawing Number	Drawing Title	Size
CCD-3597-01A	SURVEY – Block & Location Plan	1:200/1:1250 @ A1
19-004-01B	SURVEY – Site Plan & Elevations	1:100 @ A1
19-004-02	SURVEY – Floor Plans	1:100 @ A1
CCD-3597-SK01B	CONCEPT – Site Plan	1:200 @ A1
CCD-3597-SK02C	CONCEPT – Lower Ground Floor Plan	1:50 @ A1
CCD-3597-SK03C	CONCEPT – Upper Ground Floor Plan	1:50 @ A1
CCD-3597-SK04C	CONCEPT – First Floor Plan	1:50 @ A1
CCD-3597-SK05C	CONCEPT – Sections	1:50 @ A1
CCD-3597-SK06	CONCEPT – Sections	1:50 @ A1
CCD-3597-SK07	CONCEPT – Elevations	1:100 @ A1
CCD-3597-SK08	CONCEPT – Elevations	1:100 @ A1
Photomontage 1	CONCEPT – Entrance to drive	NTS
Photomontage 2	CONCEPT – East elevation (from road)	NTS
Photomontage 3	CONCEPT – East elevation (acute)	NTS
Photomontage 4	CONCEPT – South elevation (from road)	NTS
Photomontage 5	CONCEPT – West elevation (from road, through hedging)	NTS
	Design & Significance Statement	n/a
	Policy GP9 Statement	n/a
	Planning Application Form, Cheque	n/a