

CONVERSION OF BASEMENT FROM STORAGE TO TWO BEDROOMS AND BATHROOM WITH STAIRCASE AND GROUND FLOOR ALTERATIONS AT FLAT 1, BELMONT HOUSE, 3 BELMONT DRIVE, TAUNTON

Grid Reference: 322094.123859

Listed Building Consent: Works

RECOMMENDATION AND REASON(S)

Recommended Decision: Conditional Approval

It is considered that the proposal is in line with PPS 5 and Policy 9 of the Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review in respect of proposals relating to listed buildings. The listed building and its setting and any features of historic or architectural interest are, therefore, preserved in accordance with Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

RECOMMENDED CONDITION(S) (if applicable)

1. The works for which consent is hereby granted shall be begun not later than the expiration of three years from the date of this consent.

Reason: To comply with the requirements of Section 18 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended by S51(4) Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

(A2) DrNo 1909_01 Existing Basement and Ground Floor Plans

(A2) DrNo 1909_02 Proposed Layout Plans and Sections

(A4) DrNo 1909_03 Location & Block Plan

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

3. The windows and doors hereby permitted shall be timber and thereafter maintained as such, in accordance with details to include sections, mouldings, profiles, working arrangements and finished treatment that shall first have been agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to their installation.

Reason: To ensure the use of materials and details appropriate to the character of the Listed Building, in accordance with Section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Policy 9 of the

Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review and guidance contained in Planning Policy Statement 5.

4. Prior to commissioning, specific details of the following shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, with such approved details being strictly adhered to in the implementation of the approved works, unless any variation thereto is first agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority: new staircase and staircase opening; external grate outside entrance door.

Reason: To ensure the use of materials and details appropriate to the character of the Listed Building, in accordance with Section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Policy 9 of the Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review and guidance contained in Planning Policy Statement 5.

5. The door frame and door to the ground floor cupboard should be retained in their exact position unless first agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: In the interests of preserving the listed building and any features of historic or architectural interest that it possesses, in accordance with Section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Policy 9 of the Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review and guidance contained in Planning Policy Statement 5.

6. No existing feature or structure, other than those for which consent is hereby granted, shall be removed, interfered with or adapted without the prior approval of a further listed building consent.

Reason: To ensure any alterations are in the interests of the character of the Listed Building in accordance Section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Policy 9 of the Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review and guidance in Planning Policy Statement 5.

Notes for compliance

1. The presence of bats was noted by the planning officer during the site inspection. The applicant and contractors must be aware that all bats are fully protected by law under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Conservation (Natural Habitats) Regulations 1994 (as amended 2007), also known as the Habitat Regulations. It is an offence to intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to structures or places of shelter or protection used by bats, or to disturb bats whilst they are using these places.

PROPOSAL

This is an application for Listed Building consent.

This proposal involves internal alterations and conversion of a basement to additional habitable rooms.

The application should be determined by the Planning Committee because the agent is related to an employee of Taunton Deane Borough Council.

SITE DESCRIPTION AND HISTORY

Belmont House is a large early-C19 house formerly set within its own grounds but now surrounded by modern development. It was listed at grade II in 1975. The house was split into separate flats pre-1991, the exact date is unclear as there does not appear to be an application for listed building consent for this original division so presumably it was before the listing. Flat 1 is located in the south-east corner of the house. The basement below is shared between the flats but the area allocated to Flat 1 is directly below this flat although it is currently accessed by leaving this property. There is no previous planning history relating to Flat 1.

CONSULTATION AND REPRESENTATION RESPONSES

Consultees

SCC - TRANSPORT DEVELOPMENT GROUP - No observations.

Representations

None received.

PLANNING POLICIES

PPS 5 - PPS5 Planning for the Historic Environment,
S&ENPP9 - S&ENP - The Built Historic Environment,

DETERMINING ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS

The works are predominantly internal and involve alterations to the ground floor and significant changes to the basement area. The two main issues are the potential loss of historic fabric and the damage to the character and appearance, particularly to the basement, which is the area most affected by the proposed works.

Ground floor -

This has clearly been subjected to a number of past alterations, most likely during the initial division of the house. The proposed insertion of new stairs to the basement would appear to be quite neatly accommodated within the existing cupboard. My main concern is the door to the existing cupboard - this should be retained in situ. Reinstating the wall between the current WC and bath is acceptable. The creation of a new opening between the former bath and kitchen would retain enough of this wall to maintain the essence of its plan-form.

Basement

The proposed works concern part of a larger basement. It is important that the

essential character and appearance of this space is maintained and the disruption to the historic fabric is to an acceptable level. I also note that the iron beam to the jack-arched ceiling is corroded and will need a specialist inspection before this space is reused. Further alterations to this will require additional listed building consent.

Given the difficulties in managing damp in basements the installation of a bathroom is not ideal. The pipework associated with the extraction of waste and air ventilation is at least in-keeping with the character of a basement area.

There is little doubt that this proposal will result in the loss of historic fabric and plan-form. The question is whether this will have an adverse affect on the character or appearance of the listed building and in particular the basement. The essential 'subterranean' nature of this basement area will of course be retained; as will the jack-arched roof and flagstone floor covering. The wall lining and partitions are reversible. I am satisfied that the character of this basement space and of the ground floor are preserved by this proposal and recommend approval in accordance with Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

In preparing this report the Planning Officer has considered fully the implications and requirements of the Human Rights Act 1988.

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