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To: Lisa Jackson; Planning (SMDC)
Subject: SMD/2021/0528

Brook Cottage, Endon

Grade II Listed Building in Endon Conservation Area

The application proposes three alterations:

- Reinstating a small blocked opening in the NW gable. The window was formerly a 'fire window' which is typically sited alongside an historic inglenook fireplace. There is no objection to reinstating this window but the detail should be correct for the age and character of the building. The original windows will have been a leaded light and whilst a painted timber casement is acceptable, the proposed window lacks a vertical glazing bar which makes the pane size too horizontal. A slim sealed unit is acceptable but divided into 4 panes, glass secured with putty not timber beading and located in the historic position for the window (proposed location in the opening appears to close to the outer wall). The true location should be apparent when the opening is unblocked.
- Altering the upper section of an existing stable door from solid to glazed: Whilst there is no objection to this, the upper glazed section should be without glazing bars so that it more closely resembles a stable door with upper section open. This style of door never had glazing bars.
- Removal of walling between kitchen and dining room: This building has a 16th century core and incorporates a cruck frame in the bay nearest to the road with the historic ridge running parallel to it. The date of the bay furthest from the road is unknown but the stone gable and presence of the former fire window suggests that it is still an early structure, and the whole building retains a legible historic plan form. The proposal indicates the removal of an historic, structural wall marking the division between the dining room and former hall. The heritage statement notes that the exposed ceiling joists terminate in this wall so it is proposed that the opening is created below these with a steel beam inserted to carry the joist ends. There is no doubt that the removal of this section of walling will harm the historic significance of the Listed Building, removing a section of historic walling, inserting a modern steel beam, and disrupting the historic floor plan. The character of a building of this period is defined by relatively small rooms and a more open-plan layout is disruptive to its significance. The heritage statement notes that this wall has been changed in the recent past and argues that it is therefore not 'historic' but the only change appears to have been the enlargement of a serving hatch to create a doorway – the wall itself appears to be historic. In accordance with the advice in the NPPF this harm should be balanced against any public benefits – however, the benefits are only private. I would therefore suggest that this element is removed from the scheme. This advice accords with Historic England guidance 'Making Changes to Heritage Assets (para.45)

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