

Conservation Team Advice

Date: 30th December 2025
Application Ref: SMD/2025/0474 & SMD/2025/0473
Site Address: The Cottage, Tunstall Road, Biddulph
Proposal:

- Application for Listed Building Consent for external repairs, internal alterations, demolition of conservatory, construction of new single storey rear extension and replacement windows to facilitate change to educational use
- Change of use and alterations of buildings for educational use ancillary to Fairhaven (occupied by Roaches School) including demolition of conservatory, new single storey rear extension and replacement of windows

Heritage assets affected:		
Designated Heritage Asset(s):	☒	• Coach House to Fairhaven and section of Stable Yard Wall – Grade II (listing ref: 1374752) • Fairhaven – Grade II (listing ref: 1190218) • Coachman's House to Fairhaven, and Section of Stable Yard Wall – Grade II (listing ref: 1190232) • Entrance Screen and Gateway and Gates, Approximately 20 Metres East of Fairhaven – Grade II (listing ref: 1037817)
Non-Designated Heritage Asset(s):	☐	

Conservation Advice

Summary of Significance

The proposal would involve alterations to a former Coachman's House (Grade II) in the setting of Fairhaven, its boundary treatments and a former Coachhouse, all of which are separately Grade II listed.

Fairhaven (Grade II) is a former parsonage c.1850 designed R.C. Hussey. The building is constructed in coursed and dressed stone with blue plain tiles, designed in Jacobean revival style with projecting gables, gablets, large chimney stacks and mullioned and transomed windows. The significance derives from its H-plan form, association with the St John the Evangelist church, association with the Bateman family, illustrative Neo-Jacobean style and grandeur. The boundary stone wall and gate piers with obelisks are separately Grade II listed and accentuate the designed importance and prominence of Fairhaven.

The coachman's house (Grade II) also dates c.1850 by R.C. Hussey, constructed in coursed stone with blue plain tile roof. The building is modest in scale with a projecting gable with kneelers, Tudor-arched central door, mullioned windows and large chimneys which are reminiscent of the Neo-Jacobean style of the main house.

Adjoining the Coachman's House is a building range including stores and a cottage, which appear to be of later date. These are visible on historic mapping (Fig.1 & 2), are situated in close proximity to the former parsonage and were likely subordinate or ancillary to the parsonage's function. The parsonage was listed in 1987 and it is not fully clear if the cottage was in the same ownership at the time of listing, but as shown in the historic mapping The Cottage itself appears to have its own separate enclosure (Fig.2 & 3). Only this element appears to not be within the historic listing curtilage of Fairhaven, whereas the stores appear to be part of the historic curtilage of Fairhaven and are likely considered curtilage listed.

Along Tunstall Road is a former coachhouse (Grade II) also dated c.1850 by R.C. Hussey, constructed in coursed stone with blue plain tile roof. The significance derives from its association with the principal house, illustrative functional coachhouse character with some Neo-Jacobean influence.



STAFFORDSHIRE
moorlands
DISTRICT COUNCIL

ACHIEVING • EXCELLENCE



Fig.1 c.1889 OS map [online] (National Library of Scotland)

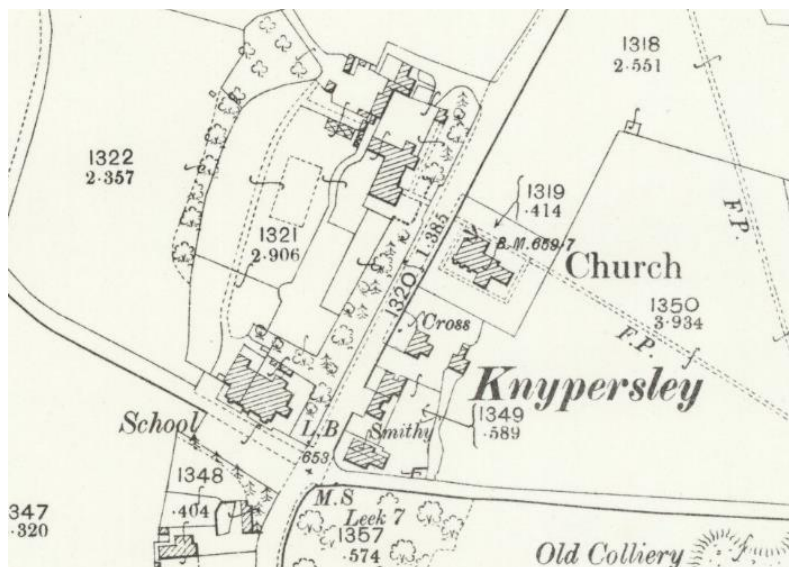


Fig.2 c.1899 OS map [online] (National Library of Scotland)



Fig.3 c.1967 National Grid map [online] (National Library of Scotland)

Assessment and Impact

The proposal seeks permission for the renovation and conversion of the lower portion of The Coachman's House, the stores and a cottage to educational use. The Coachman's House is Grade II listed, the stores are considered to be curtilage listed whereas the cottage is outside the listed curtilage (but still within the immediate setting of the Listed Buildings).

The building range is built into the rising topography, meaning access to the ground and first floors can be accessed from the rear and front elevation respectively. There have been some modern inappropriate alterations to the cottage, such as the installation of upvc windows and a conservatory to the rear. The upper floors of the Coachman's House is currently in use, so the application only seeks conversion for the lower ground floor level of this part of the building range.

External works

The proposal seeks permission for the refurbishment of walls and roofing to the whole building range, replacement windows and doors, demolition of the conservatory to The Cottage and replacement with a single-storey flat roof extension.

The annotations on the proposed elevations (dwg no. 25 005_02_001 & 25 005_02_002) indicate that repairs will be carried out to the roof and stone walling of the properties, but no specific details have been provided. It would be useful if a proposed schedule of works could be provided, which specified products, materials and/or methods to be used. For example, details on mortar, extent of replacement, source of stone and roof tiles for any replacements, details of any thermal upgrades to roofing, details of any cleaning of stonework ect.

The annotations on the proposed plans indicate that the cills and lintels will be repainted in RAL 1013 (Oyster White). There are no concerns with the principle of this as it appears a sympathetic colour but, as mentioned above, it would useful to have any details of stone cleaning methods if repainting architectural features to ensure the works appropriate to the historic fabric of the building.

It is noted that the annotations on the Existing Elevations (dwg no. 25 005_00_005) mention all windows are uPVC and the application form mentions replacement windows would be 'Heritage uPVC'. From the site visit, it did not appear that all the windows were uPVC but only those in The Cottage (not listed nor curtilage listed). No technical drawn details of the replacement windows have been provided, but the principle of uPVC is unlikely to be supported from a conservation perspective as it is not a traditional material and its bulky design often results in a poor imitation of traditional joinery detailing, which would detract from the architectural interest of the building. There may be a case for uPVC in only The Cottage as this is outside the historic curtilage of the Listed Buildings and there are uPVC windows already in situ. However given its close proximity to other designated heritage assets, it would still be suggested that technical details of the windows are provided to ensure that the proposed works

would not harm the setting of the Listed Buildings. For the other windows, we would encourage timber or metal as this would be more appropriate to the historic significance of the building.

Rooflights are proposed to the lean-to at the front of The Cottage and would unlikely distract from the building's appearance as these are sited quite discreetly. However, similar to above, we would suggest technical details are provided.

The proposed works would also involve the widening a doorway to the storage building. Although no overly clear why this is proposed, the stonework appears to have been altered previously so this would unlikely harm the special interest of the building.

The proposal mentions replacement timber soffits and fascias like-for-like. It would be recommended that the fascias/soffits are not reinstated as these do not appear to be a traditional detail. The building's appear to have been designed for rise and fall brackets. The annotations on the plans also mention upvc rainwater goods, which would be discouraged on the listed and curtilage listed building as not a sympathetic material. If cast iron rainwater goods are in situ these should be repaired or replaced like-for-like, if an inferior alternative has been installed a heritage aluminium may be more appropriate.

The proposal would involve the demolition of the modern conservatory which is of no heritage value and detracts from the setting of the adjacent Listed Building. The proposed replacement extension would be single-storey, flat roof construction, finished in stonework with a bi-fold door and flat rooflights. It would be approx. 3m (H) x 5m (L) x 3.4m (D). Whilst the proposed stonework may tie in with the principal building, the flat roof form and bulky parapet design would be at odds with the more vernacular appearance of The Cottage and the surrounding Jacobean revival architectural influence. Particularly with the large expanse of glazing, this would have a lot of horizontal emphasis. From a conservation perspective, a lean-to design may be more appropriate here. It may be appropriate to make a shallower depth extension to accommodate this however.

It is not overly clear if there any proposed works to boundary treatments within the development site as there were a few low boundary walls and steps, also garden of The Cottage is situated at a higher topography. Clarification on this would be required.

Internal Works

In general, the proposed internal works would maintain much of the overall layout and features such as the historic barrel vaulted bays which is supported from a conservation perspective. A new staircase is proposed to the store and a new internal opening between the store and cottage would be made, both of which would have a very minor impact on the layout and historic fabric.

It would, however, be suggested that some further details are provided on the internal treatment of the new openings in the store (highlighted in yellow below) e.g. sectional detail.

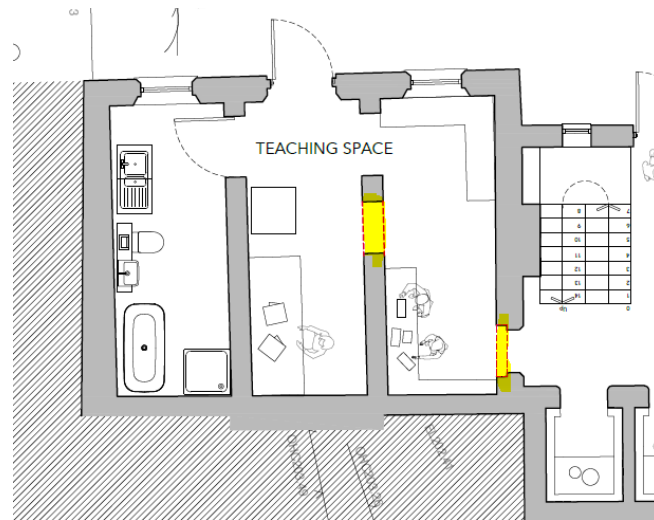


Fig.4 Proposed floorplan

Overall, we are supportive of the principle of the restoration of these building and bringing them back into use as this would enable their maintenance and long-term conservation. However, as noted above, there are some technical details that need clarifying and it would be suggested that the design of the extension is altered to better reflect the character of the buildings in the development site.

Legislation and Policy

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

The local planning authority should have a desirability of preserving the setting and special interest of the Listed Building (s.16 and 66).

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024

In determining applications, local authorities should take account of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation, the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality, the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness (par.210).

Any harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within the setting), should require clear and convincing justification (par.213).

Where a proposed development would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use (par.215).

Local Development Framework

Consideration should also be given to the following documents and local development framework policies:

- Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (Adopted 2020) – DC2 The Historic Environment

Conclusions and Recommendations

In summary, the proposal would likely result in minor level of harm to the special interest of the Listed Building, subject to clarification on the extent of works, and minor-moderate level of harm to the setting of the Listed Buildings due to the design of the extension. This would fail to satisfy the provisions of s.16 and 66 of the Act. With reference to the planning policies, this would be 'less than substantial harm' to the designated heritage assets (par.215 of NPPF and policy DC2 of the local development framework). It is acknowledged there are likely some public benefits arising from the proposal, but it would still be recommended that clarification on detailing and alterations to the design of the extension are secured through the permission to ensure that the harm to the heritage assets is reduced or removed.

From a conservation perspective, we would suggest the following:

- Schedule of works provided – indicating extent of 'repairs', any cleaning to stonework and materials/methods/product specifications to be used
- Technical details of windows, external doors and rooflights to be provided
➔ Timber/metal to the store buildings
- Replacement rainwater goods to be metal – cast iron or aluminium depending on what is currently in situ
- Alterations to the design of the extension – possible lean-to roof would be more sympathetic
- Details of any new boundary treatments or alterations to existing
- Technical/sectional detail of new openings in the store room (Fig.4)
- Specific details of lining of walls, floors and ceilings (could be included in the schedule of works)

Conservation Officer: Megan Atkinson