

Heritage Impact Statement

Lowes Farmhouse, Lowes Lane, Swarkestone

This statement is prepared to accompany a Listed Building Consent application for the remediation of the replacement glazing, sliding sash casements and glazing bars in the windows on the south facing elevation of Lowes Farmhouse.

The statement should be read in the context of the confirmed Enforcement Notice requiring the replacement of these elements because the existing window specifications are not of the required standard..

The Enforcement Notice was varied by the Planning Inspectorate to not require the installation of complete new frames and fenestration, but only to require the replacement of the moveable sliding sash elements with the inclusion of the correct glazing bars between individual panes. The current proposal is to seek a modification to the required replacement panes to incorporate two layers of glazing rather than the one layer which was specified in the Notice as the reinstatement which was required. In all other respects, the proposal includes all the requirements of the Enforcement Notice in terms of the design of the sash frames and glazing bars, traditional putty and painting specification.

The reason for seeking this single variation is that no weight had been placed in the enforcement appeal by either the appellant or the Local Planning Authority on the need to provide more sustainable materials which reduce the need for the consumption of carbon derived heating fuels. It is now considered that the momentum of sustainable solutions to the climate change crisis has significantly moved the terms of reference since the determination of the Enforcement Notice by the Planning Inspectorate.

It should be noted that the current applicant has acquired the property since the Enforcement action was commenced and took no part in the determination of the appeal.

Since the listing of the property the creation of a group of dwellings has resulted from the conversion of the farm outbuildings. These dwellings come between the original farmhouse and Lowes Lane. The original farmhouse has also been extended at ground floor level and ancillary additional accommodation has also been permitted and constructed within the curtilage.

It is noted that the glazing solution proposed has already been adopted in the adjacent, attached property, the Dovecote, with the approval of the Local Planning Authority under the Listed Building Consent reference 9/2015/1014. That approval permitted the use of two glazing layers in the sash window facing Lowes Lane, which is much closer to public view than the current proposal. Other buildings within this group of conversions also have double glazing in the fenestration.

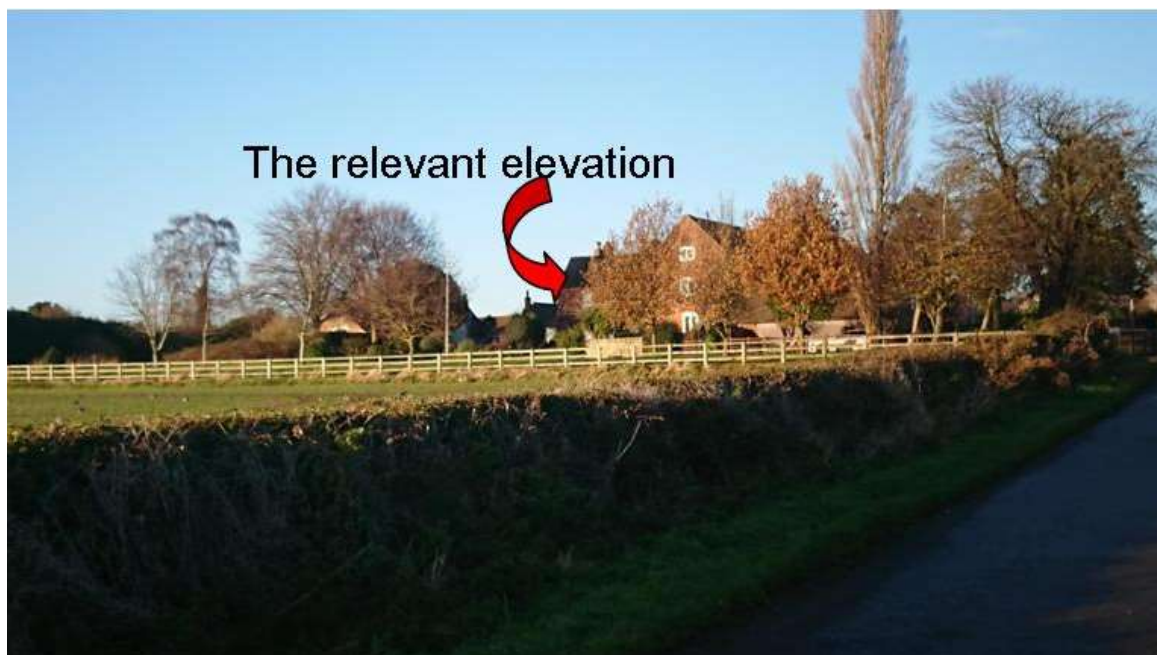
The applicant has appointed Mumford Restorations, noted local traditional joinery manufacturers and installers to carry out the work. In common with all other sectors of the building trades, the lead-in time for bespoke joinery in terms of materials, manufacture and fitting has extended due to disruption in delivery at the same time as a peak in demand because of the pandemic. Therefore whilst the applicant has used best endeavours to procure compliance with the enforcement notice, there is still a hiatus in the delivery of compliance due to factors beyond control.

Accordingly, the opportunity arises for a re-consideration of the equity of the requirements of the notice, given the discovery that the attached building had been given permission for the use of the type of glazing solution that is now considered by the applicant to be the most appropriate, in the face of the need for greater sustainability to overcome the effects of climate change.

In view of the widespread use of similar joinery solutions in the listed buildings of South Derbyshire, the current owner, who had no responsibility for the installation of the existing non-compliant design, simply seeks to adopt a sustainable solution which has been adopted by the Planning Authority in more publicly accessible locations.

Assessment

The nearest public view of some of the windows is at a distance of 120m from Lowes Lane. There is no public view of the complete façade because it is obscured from Lowes Lane by the buildings in front of it, illustrated in Photograph 1, so the only position from which it can be viewed as a whole is from the middle of the fields to the south, to which there is no public access. The nearest location from which most of the elevation can be seen from Lowes Lane is shown in Photograph 2, at a distance of 200 metres.



Photograph 1: The closest partial public view of the elevation (note winter foliage condition)



Photograph 2: The nearest public view of the complete elevation

Therefore, there is only a very limited public interest served in maintaining a complete resistance to change from the original design. It is accepted by the applicant that the existing windows are not acceptable, resultant from the Enforcement Appeal decision, but that there is scope for variation in the solution which could be considered by the LPA to be acceptable, without detriment to that public interest.

Given that only very little weight that can be given to the public interest in the appearance of the building, within the context of the other buildings around it, greater weight can be given to the need to respond to climate change.

Accordingly, the Local planning Authority is invited to permit this minor variation with a view to responding to the overarching consideration of the National Planning policy Framework (NPPF) to achieve sustainable development. Particularly in relation to climate change, in Paragraph 7 of the NPPF, there is a reminder that the UK has agreed to pursue the 17 Global Goals for Sustainable Development in the period to 2030. These address social progress, economic well-being and environmental protection. This amendment to the NPPF pre-dated COP21 and further reinforcements to planning policy will trickle down from the decisions taken in Glasgow.

It is considered that the application as proposed will result in less than substantial harm to a heritage asset, as set out in Paragraph 202 of the NPPF, and therefore the public interest of carrying out measures which assist in dealing with the climate change crisis should outweigh, in this instance, the demand to return the building to the standard of construction prevalent when it was constructed.

Appendix 1

Listing Description of Lowes House

Farmhouse and attached farmbuildings. Early C19 with minor later alterations. Red brick with stone dressings and plain tile roof with three brick ridge stacks, plus dentilled eaves band. Two storey nine bay range to north, of which seven to west form the present farmhouse, with six bay, two storey range at right angles to east, plus lower threshing barn to south end. Farmhouse has a flush panelled door and plain overlight below wedge stone lintel with bottom edge slightly arched to either side of central keystone. To west there are three glazing bar sashes below similar lintels, that to far west lengthened, and to east there are two similar windows. Above there are seven similar, shallower windows. Two bays to east and the five northern bays of the east range have openings on both floors with similar lintels. Some of these openings are now blocked or used as doors. To south end of the two storey part there is a blocked gauged brick segmental arch with stone imposts and keyblock, and beyond to south the threshing barn has a similar tall opening to centre with slit breathers to either side.

Date of Listing March 1987 (Pre-dating conversion to group of dwellings)

Appendix 2

Specification of Proposed Window Remediation

Hardwood sliding sash frames to accept Planiform Low E 2 x 4mm glazing with 4mm gap

U Value of 1.6 W/m²k in accordance with current standards

Glazing beads of the profile shown allowing for putty finished in triangular section.

Materials and Installation to be carried out in accordance with BS 1186

