

DECISION DELEGATED TO DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

Application No: H18-0387-21 **Applicant:** The Snowgoose Wildlife Trust

Proposal: Basement conversion, removal of modern masonry walls and re-instatement of Sir Peter Scotts Sketching Window

Location: East Lighthouse East Bank Sutton Bridge

Terminal Date: 21st June 2021

Planning Policies

South East Lincolnshire Local Plan - Adopted: March 2019

01	Spatial Strategy
02	Development Management
03	Design of New Development
29	The Historic Environment

National Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework 2019

Sections 12 and 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2019)

Representations:

	Object	Support	No Obj.	Comments
PARISH COUNCIL	0	1	0	0
WARD MEMBER	0	0	0	0

CASE OFFICER ASSESSMENT

Proposal

This full planning application is for the proposed basement conversion, reinstatement of historic feature window and removal of modern masonry walls at the East Lighthouse (Sir Peter Scott Lighthouse), East Bank, Sutton Bridge.

The proposed works are grouped as such:

Basement

The proposed basement conversion would be to convert the basement from a unused space to a bedroom with en suite. A new softwood staircase is suggested to replace the missing case. It is then proposed that the floor would be covered with cork insulation, covered with 'medite' boarding.

15mm curved wood wool panels would then be fitted to the interior walls of the circular room, fitted in place with mortar joints and lime plaster.

Timber stud walls to be constructed to create the en-suite. Stud walls to be panelled with magnesium oxide boards (12mm) and coated with lime plaster. En-suite shower room fitting to be installed, with macerator type pump fed into existing drainage system. Ventillation fan to be installed and vent pipe ran to the external, venting into existing undercroft

Space between existing ceiling joists to be insulated with 100 mm of Rockwool insulation and board with 15mm Hemp Wool slabs and lime plaster.

Existing UPVC windows to be replaced with timber, side hung sliding sash units.

Kitchen

The wall between the kitchen and the existing w.c/shower room to be removed, creating a larger open-plan kitchen.

Existing UPVC windows to be replaced with timber hung sash windows. 2 Pairs of window openings on the Western elevation to be knocked through to become 2 larger openings, one featuring timber windows, the other, windows and a French door. 1 window on the Eastern elevation to be removed and opening blocked up.

Internal walls to re re-plastered using like-for-like lime plaster.

New kitchen units and tiled floor to be installed.

Bathroom

Existing wall separating the w/c and bathroom in the Eastern wing of the building to be removed, creating one larger bathroom. Ceiling to be insulated using hemp insulation and then coated with lime plaster. 'Medite' wall cladding, including dado rail and skirting to be installed. New bathroom units to be installed - these would be of a Victorian style.

Studio

Existing central casement window on the Eastern elevation to be removed and the original Sir Peter Scott painting window (bay window) to be recreated in its place using timber.

A new log burning stove to be installed in the North Eastern corner of the room, with installation of associated chimney breaching the roof above.

First floor bedroom

Recreation/restoration of Sir Peter Scott's goose wall mural, as described in 'The Eye in the Wind', featuring outline geese 'forever circling the tower'./

Site Description

The Sir Peter Scott Lighthouse is a highly prominent and important listed building set out by the coastal agricultural region to the North East of Sutton Bridge. The lighthouse is known for having been the residence of famed British Ornithologist, Conservationist and Broadcaster, Sir Peter Scott. The site has a rich history of environmental and wildlife conservation. Since the military took possession of the site prior to WW2, several alterations have taken place which have moved the site further from originality and from the unique alterations made by Sir Scott himself to facilitate its conservationist use. The building is Listed at a Grade II* level. Historic England's description reads as follows;

"Lighthouse, now house. Early C19 with C20 alterations. Colourwashed rendered brick. Rounded lead roof. Single central red brick stack. 3 storeys plus octagonal lantern, the lantern defined by a deep moulded brick band. West side with C20 lean-to projecting from the ground floor and single C20 casements to first and second floors. South side with 3 C20 casements. North side with single segmental arched casements to ground and first floors. North and east sides with C20 additions to the ground floor. Lantern with single circular openings to north east and north sides."

The area generally is largely wild land and agricultural land. The site is situated on the eastern bank of the Nene river and forms a part of the Wash National Nature Reserve. There are no adjacent buildings and the only sign of development within eyesight of the plot is the associated Western Lighthouse on the opposite bank of the river, which is similarly listed, but to a Grade II level.

History

H18-0320-11

Construction of Green Gateway visitor centre in grounds of lighthouse and conversion of lighthouse garages to museum for related Sir Peter Scott exhibition. Approved on 18-08-11.

H18-0476-13

Renewal of external render and new windows in Lighthouse Tower (part retrospective). Approved on 10-09-13.

Consultation Responses

Sutton Bridge Parish Council

Supports the application due to the sympathy with the site.

Historic England

Refers the case officer to 'Traditional windows: Their Care, Replacement and Upgrading (Historic England 2017)' to assist them in making a determination. Requests no further consultation unless a material change is made to the proposal.

Lincolnshire County Council Historic Environment Officer - from sister LBC application, H18-0388-21

Supports the proposal as the alterations/restorations included help to bring the site back into viable use and, especially the proposed research into and potential restoration of interior decorative features, help to better reveal the site's history.

It is requested that a copy of the output report from the proposed watching brief be submitted to the County Council HER for recording. This will be achieved via a condition to this application.

Planning Considerations

Heritage Impact

The Local Planning Authority does not consider there to be any risk presented to the value or significance of any heritage asset, designated or non-designated. The proposed works to the basement are wholly commensurate to the property, making use of traditional insulation methods, and materials of construction. The reintroduction of a staircase to the area will both bring an important element of the site back into use, but also aid in its restoration and contribute to the authenticity of the site. The introduction of stud walls will be fully reversible and the venting system for the extractor fan will only emerge in a secluded, barely visible location. Bringing this extremely dilapidated element of the site back into good keeping and regular use will aid in saving the site from progressive degradation.

With regards the work being carried out to the kitchen area, the removal of original materials in the context of the internal masonry walls is regrettable, however, these walls are not particularly contributive to the character of the site and the original layout should remain mostly readable.

Again, the loss of the exterior material between the Western windows and also the window to be blocked up on the Eastern side also represent regrettable loss of original material however, the windows present are inappropriate results of a 1985 'restoration' which deployed UPVC windows throughout the building. It is felt that the alterations to the windows and window openings, including the replacement of all of the UPVC windows with timber hung sash windows are appropriate forms of development which will not significantly alter the character of the site and which enhance the material authenticity of the site.

The proposed replacement of kitchen units and floor surfaces is deemed acceptable as neither of those which are extant are deemed to be of any particular note - the proposed style is commensurate with the character of the site.

The proposed works to the bathroom area of the Western wing are all deemed to be appropriate. Again, traditional materials are proposed to be used throughout and the loss of the wall between rooms is deemed to be minimal development which does not alter the overall character of the site whatsoever. The proposed replacement of bathroom units and floor surfaces is deemed acceptable as neither of those which are extant are deemed to be of any particular note - the proposed style is commensurate with the character of the site.

The proposed works to the studio room are impressive in tone. It is greatly appreciated that the applicant wishes to reintroduce the Eastern bay 'sketching window' which Sir Scott had referred to specifically in some of his writings. This is done by replacing the inappropriate UPVC double window that exists in its place with the construction of the bay including introduction of timber windows. This is considered to be a major contribution to improving the appearance of the site and a genuine restoration of authenticity and historic provenance. The addition of the log burner and associated flue in the North Eastern corner of the studio room are deemed to be inconsequential to the character of the site, bearing only a minimum of impact upon the site and an impact which is, on balance, neutral.

The restoration of Sir Scott's interior wall murals is deemed to be a highly favourable element of this proposal, which shall help to restore a great deal of the historic provenance to the site.

For the reasons discussed above, this application is deemed to have an overwhelmingly positive impact upon the site and therefore, this application helps to both conserve and enhance the historic environment in line with Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2019).

Planning Balance

The loss of some material in the shape of some interior and exterior wall space is regrettable, however, none of the material it is proposed will be lost is of particular importance to the character of the site and overall, on balance, all other elements of this proposal are overwhelmingly positive and restorative to the site - these elements far outweigh the former concerns.

Conclusion

For the reasons listed above, this application is deemed to fall into accordance with Policies 1, 2, 3 and 29 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019), as well as Sections 12 and 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2019). Therefore, this application is recommended for approval.

Additional Considerations

Public Sector Equality Duty

In making this decision the Authority must have regard to the public sector equality duty (PSED) under s.149 of the Equalities Act. This means that the Council must have due regard to the need (in discharging its functions) to:

A. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act

B. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. This may include removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic; taking steps to meet the special needs of those with a protected characteristic; encouraging participation in public life (or other areas where they are underrepresented) of people with a protected characteristic(s).

C. Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The PSED must be considered as a relevant factor in making this decision but does not impose a duty to achieve the outcomes in s.149. It is only one factor that needs to be considered, and may be balanced against other relevant factors.

It is not considered that the recommendation in this case will have a disproportionately adverse impact on a protected characteristic.

Human Rights

In making a decision, the Authority should be aware of and take into account any implications that may arise from the Human Rights Act 1998. Under the Act, it is unlawful for a public authority such as South Holland District Council to act in a manner that is incompatible with the European Convention on Human Rights. The Authority is referred specifically to Article 8 (right to respect for private and family life) and Article 1 of the First Protocol (protection of property).

It is not considered that the recommendation in this case interferes with local residents' right to respect for their private and family life, home and correspondence, except insofar as it is necessary to protect the rights and freedoms of others (in this case, the rights of the applicant). The Council is also permitted to control the use of property in accordance with the general public interest and the recommendation is considered to be a proportionate response to the submitted application based on the considerations set out in this report.