DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Introduction

This application seeks permission to construct a new garden room along with a new and improved driveway with gated access, brick piers and new fencing within the front garden of The Stables, 68A Main Street, Hartford which is located between two listed adjacent neighbouring properties. The site is located within the Hartford Conservation Area and measures approximately 650sq.m.

There is off road parking on the site for approximately 4-5 cars with limited space for turning and manoeuvring. Foul water drainage is present and is shown on the accompanying drawings and is assumed to connect to the mains foul-water sewer via the existing manholes into the mains sewer in Main Street. There are 11 existing trees on the site shown on the accompanying drawings labelled as T1-T11.

Previous Planning Applications

A previous planning application was made in 2021 for the erection of a new garage along with the rebuilding works to the existing brick front boundary wall. This application was withdrawn as a result of the comments received from the Conservation Officer who had determined the the front wall fell within the curtilage of the Manor House (No.66). In the light of this decision, a new application was submitted (24/00917/HHFUL) that placed the garage back from the wall to a position where it was almost entirely hidden by the existing outhouses adjacent to No.70. This application was approved. The current application is a modification of this previous application in which the garage is substituted by a slightly smaller garden room with all other associated changes of the driveway and site remaining the same.

Proposed Site Changes

The existing dwelling No.68A was a former barn and stables building historically associated with The Manor House (No.66). The existing dwelling is located in the rear corner with an asphalt driveway leading up to the house. The garden is set behind the front boundary wall and the driveway shared with the owners of No.66. The changes for the driveway proposed in the current application do not differ from the previous application that was approved. There is ample space on the site for the proposed changes and the improvements to the existing vehicular movement will be facilitated by creating a full turning circle on the site without affecting the shared access arrangements with No. 66. This layout provides parking for No.66 without restricting the applicants access and provides improved privacy to No. 68A front garden and amenity space. Importantly, the proposed arrangement also eliminates the existing 'dog-leg' driveway which currently cannot be negotiated by emergency service vehicles (neither fire-engine nor ambulance) to allow a close approach to the house (No.68a).

The existing asphalt drive area will be replaced with a new driveway which will be finished with gravel to improve the ground permeability. The position of the proposed garden room has been set 3.5m inside the north east boundary and 0.6m from the rear wall of the existing garage. The 3.5m separation combined with the slope of the roof away from the boundary will reduce the impact and any loss of daylight into the rear garden of No.70, while the 0.6m distance from the old outhouses is sufficient to allow access for future maintenance. The location is also a comfortable distance away from the existing trees so as not to affect the existing tree root protection zone.

Proposed garden-room

The proposed garden room will be partly for recreational use and partly for storage, incorporating a separate storage area on the ground floor and an extensive storage space in the loft. As the main house (68A) has a Dutch gable (or Gambrel roof), there is no loft storage space and limited storage elsewhere in the house. The scale, form and proportions of the proposed garden room reflect the size of space required for outdoor activity and storage. With a footprint of 5x4m it is smaller than the previously approved garage (6x4m) and retains the same roof height. As with the previously approved garage, it has been designed to be of a smaller scale compared to the neighbours existing garage/store-room which it will stand beside. In the wider context, the scale, form and massing of the garden room is subservient to the existing house (68A) and the adjacent neighbours' houses (66 and 70). The building will be constructed using materials appropriate to the conservation area (as detailed in the main application document).

Landscaping and drainage

The plot is an irregular shaped plot with a mix of timber fencing, hedges, mature shrubs and a mix of trees. The Proposal retains all the existing boundaries to the site. In order to be able to construct the proposed driveway, the removal of two small hawthorn trees (one of which is dead) will be required, marked T9 and T10 on the accompanying drawings. The new vehicular gates, brick piers and fencing will provide the residents of 68A with a more private amenity space compared to the existing arrangement and will improve the vehicular movements within the site for both the applicant and for the neighbours at No.66.

No new foul-water drainage is required as part of this application. The surface water drainage from the new garden room will be directed away from the buildings to a new soak away located in the rear garden. The property is in an area with low risk of flooding on the flood risk map so no flood risk assessment has been provided.