

HERITAGE STATEMENT

Conservatory Removal /Alteration

Issue 1: Feb 2025



1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Glebelands House is a substantial historic building located within its own grounds in the suburbs of Wokingham. It currently accommodates a residential care home owned and operated by Greensleeves Care. The house and outbuildings are listed Grade II but have been much added to and notably a courtyard development (The Broccoli Cloister) abuts its northwestern end. However, the character of the whole is preserved both externally (and to a lesser extent) internally.
- 1.2 The site is owned by the Greensleeves Homes Trust (a registered charity) and the principal house, attached 1950's Wing and Link Wing provide residential and nursing care. The care facility adjoins the Broccoli Cloister that offers close care living apartments for the elderly.
- 1.3 The proposals concern the southeastern end of the original house only.
- 1.4 Residential care use has been extant at the site since 1936 and the home was latterly operated by the Broccoli Foundation who developed it from the 1980's through to the early 2000's. The surrounding area has also been redeveloped for private residential use. Greensleeves took over the site in 2017.
- 1.5 The application is for Listed Building Consent for:
 - Removal of the conservatory.
 - The alteration of a (now exposed) external door and entrance steps.
 - The formation of office accommodation in the former 'stage' area.
 - External fabric repairs.
- 1.6 A Pre-App (230359) and Application (230604) were submitted in 2023. The former sought to establish whether a replacement building would be acceptable and the latter for dormer window (timber) repairs. The responses to these applications were unsupportive and the repairs application was withdrawn pending further investigation. An earlier application for a like for like replacement of the Conservatory (and Cottage window replacement LBC/182697) was consented in 2018.

2.0 Description of Heritage Asset and Setting

- 2.1 The main house and stables are separately listed Grade II both dating to 1897 when the property was built by Sir Eric Newton:
 - Glebelands House, List Entry 1118054 (1987) – listed legacy record – house in neo-Tudor style.
 - Glebelands Stable Block, List Entry 1154929 (1987) – listed legacy record.

- 2.2 The Conservatory is located on the southeastern flank of the main house and whilst not thought to be an original feature the current construction may have replaced an earlier construction. It is prominent on approach from the south and is typically Edwardian in its styling.
- 2.3 The Conservatory is single glazed and formed from a number of softwood window units arranged on a regular module supporting a series of timber rafters. The whole sits on a fair-faced brick plinth and the principal rafters are augmented by a system of brackets and iron ties.

3.0 Assessment of Significance

- 3.1 The Conservatory is something of an external ornament given it is rarely used by the home as it is too cold in winter and too hot in summer. Its structure is incohesive given its modular construction, opening vents no-longer work, it leaks and presents problems with condensation and heat loss. Whilst performance is an issue the timber is now badly deteriorating (see photo below).



Conservatory window detail (2019)

- 3.2 The LPA in their Memorandum response to Pre-App 230359 commented on the mistakes of the past with regard the form and location of the Conservatory. They conclude it 'to be a somewhat incongruous feature that is considered to be detrimental to the architectural appearance and quality of this designated heritage asset.' On this basis the Conservatory is deemed to have little significance other than as a detrimental feature.

- 3.3 The List entry for the Lounge reads 'Lounge has modillion cornice and panelling with moulded head, two thirds of room height.' The stage area is a raised podium (in cast concrete) at its southwestern end with a curtained proscenium (it is not known at what stage this was added but it is not considered original) that gives onto the garden front bay window which is effectively closed off by a bank of cupboards. The original space is therefore already compromised and the returns on either side of the stage provide a natural break line.



Stage from flank Lounge

4.0 Design Proposals

- 4.1 The conservatory will be dismantled and removed. Brickwork and abutment flashings will be made good and the steps reinstated to the original flank doorcase. In addition, the flush door set that gives access from the rear of the stage to the Conservatory (assumed original opening) will be replaced with glazed (leaded light) window.
- 4.2 The (unused) stage area flanking the Conservatory is to be converted to office use. This includes an original raised podium and steps that are maintained and the erection of partition walls to form two offices. The central dividing wall coincides with the central mullion of the southwestern bay of the garden front.
- 4.3 The remaining works are confined to longstanding maintenance and defective works particularly at eaves and roof level.



Side door to stage

5.0 Impact

- 5.1 The removal of the conservatory essentially restores the building to its original form. And was formerly endorsed by the local authority. From an operational perspective the Conservatory does not offer ideal habitable space and the costs for reinstatement (£c.250K) is not considered an effective use of funds. Moreover, its modular construction would allow for dismantling rather than wholesale demolition.



Indicative high-level defect

- 5.2 Internally the proposals should have little other than peripheral (fixes and finishing) impact on the interior of the building (though this is already much altered). No or only limited alteration and demolition is involved in delivery of the new offices though new services will

need to be extended into the area. The alterations should permit reinstatement of the stage area if ever desired.



Original flank door set within Conservatory