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Neil Dowlman Architecture

Planning | Design | Project Management

STATEMENT OF JUSTIFICATION

Proposed Conversion

At:
The Old Mill
Mill Lane
Sutterton
Lincolnshire
PE20 2EN

Job Number:
B/3422

October 2020


Architectural Consultants



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Project Number:	B/3422
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STATEMENT OF JUSTIFICATION

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Mill at Sutterton is actually located over 1km west of the centre of Sutterton along the old A17. It stands on the south side of the A17 on the junction with Mill Lane. The tower is of five floors and is linked to a granary building, which has already been converted for residential use. The tower has long since lost its sails, dome and gallery.
- 1.2 A photograph dated 1928 shows the sails missing with the dome intact and the gallery in place. A second photograph of 1949 has the dome missing and does not appear to show the gallery in place. The inside of the tower is open to the elements.
- 1.3 Allegedly the mill was built around 1855 and it is largely built in a local brick with walls of 450mm thickness.
- 1.4 Internally none of the original workings are present. The stairs are all missing and very little remains of the timber floors, although, where they do exist some of the metal fittings are still in place but in a rusted state. Where the ground floor was once located, there is a solid mass of rotted timber, sawdust, pigeon feathers and detritus as well as pieces of the floor structures and windows where they have fallen into the void that existed between the ground floor and the actual ground. This “sump” is approximately 1m deep.
- 1.5 None of the windows are in any condition to be refurbished with several being missing and others having been altered in style from the originals.
- 1.6 The top of the tower has been roofed with a rough timber and felt structure to keep out the wet, but the absence of windows means that damp is currently getting in as are pigeons and other wildlife.
- 1.7 The tower does have the benefit of a set of timber steps and a balcony outside the main door which faces to the north/north east. These are relatively recent being subject to a recent planning application.

2. The Proposals

- 2.1 It is intended to replace the floors, windows, steps, gallery and roof in order to convert the tower into habitable accommodation. The proposals are for a Kitchen/Diner at ground floor, Bedroom and Ensuite at First Floor, Bedroom at Second Floor, Bedroom and En-suite at Third Floor and a living area/viewing gallery at the Fourth Floor. With the alteration of floor level heights, this allows the introduction of an additional floor to create a continuous run of windows on top of the existing brickwork of the mill with a lead cap roof. In order to achieve this the floor's have to be repositioned and renewed, windows renewed, steps fitted in order to comply with the fire safety requirements of the Building Regulations. The gallery will be renewed as a cosmetic but non-essential element of the works.
- 2.1 As detailed above the original floors are only present in the form of some of the original beams with a few joists present at first floor level. The plan of the mill as it stands shows where these beams are present. It is proposed that through confirmation of structural calculations by a chartered structural engineer that floor joists and associated timber support beams will be introduced in order to ensure support and stability to the existing mill where required. Wide plank T&G hardwood flooring will be used above the joists. New purpose made hardwood staircases will be introduced. A 100mm diameter wastepipe will be introduced where shown in order to serve the drainage from bathrooms at upper floor levels which will be encased within a steel tube and fully insulated.

- 2.3 Because of the need for a continuous fire protected stairway, the new stair will spiral up the tower with landings at each floor, rather than be a series of separate open tread stairs stacked vertically on top of each other as would have been the case in a working mill. This stair will also be supported by the internal studwork and the existing masonry. All internal partitions will then be constructed of stud and plasterboard.
- 2.4 The windows will be replaced with new sliding sashes to match the style of the oldest and, presumably most original, of those units currently in place and are to be manufactured in well-seasoned timbers.
- 2.5 The roof is to be completely removed with the insertion of purpose made hardwood windows continually to provide a panoramic view and a structural insulated roof with lead welts and grey powder coated aluminium finial as detailed.
- 2.6 The detail for the replacement of the gallery has to be a matter of conjecture. The photograph of 1928 seems to suggest an iron balustrade at least, but the photograph even in its best reproduction is not taken close enough to the mill to tell exactly how the gallery is attached. The only physical evidence for the gallery is the presence of sockets in the brickwork every 600mm or so around the drum and just below the cills of the first floor windows. The detail shown, therefore, is taking a lead from the metal balustrading on the photograph matched with a more traditional timber deck and bracketwork.
- 2.7 Internally the inside face of the tower drum is to be cleaned down and repointed with lime mortar and then plastered with a lime based insulating rendering plaster (a.m.b.Limetec or similar) Where vents or fans are required to be taken through the existing walls they will be fitted with a black cast iron grilles/gratings on the outside. All pipe work will be fitted inside the central service void referred to above.
- 2.8 Externally the brickwork is to be cleaned down and repointed, again with lime based mortar and the lower storey up to the gallery will be repainted with bitumen paint.

Conclusion

The changes listed above are all required to

- a) weatherproof and stabilise the existing structure.
- b) to allow a satisfactory conversion for use as residential accommodation.

Where the new windows are fitted no double glazing has been detailed, but in order to create an environment that is reasonably comfortable to live in, secondary glazing units will be included.

The roof being rebuilt will have an increased level of insulation in it. The current roof is of a similar concept but is not giving the best protection from the elements.

The fittings installed after the structural alterations listed will be of essentially domestic nature and in keeping with those already allowed in the converted granary next door.