

Design and Access Statement

APP/10/0030

Context

Meadowsweet comprises two separate buildings, joined together at one corner for internal access. The older cottage shown on the left in Fig 1, is located adjacent to St Peters Road and is believed to date from AD 1530. The newer 'add-on' cottage on the right in Fig. 1 is partly constructed in a 'Mock Tudor' type style; it is located adjacent to Clovelly Road and dates from AD1920. This application concerns the re-thatching of this newer cottage using a more durable water reed thatching material.



Fig 1: View from St Peters Road

With financial support from Havant Borough Council, both cottages were last re-thatched in 1995 using a top coat of long straw. Only 8 years later the roof started to leak and now after 15 years, most of this thatch is worn away. Despite several patch-type repairs, the roof leaks in several places causing serious damage to the internal structure of the building. Research on this issue finds strong support from professional thatchers, the Master Thatchers Association and many home owners in favour of water reed because of its superior life expectancy. Mr Matthew Holt, who has tendered for this project, advises the use of a fine grade high quality Hungarian water reed which visually resembles combed wheat straw. Having removed old and rotten material, the new water reed is to be sparred onto the remaining layers of the existing roof, completing the roof with a flush wrap-over ridge. The use of water reed is attractive for several reasons:

- Water reed has a published life expectancy of some 40 - 60 years
- Same cost as combed wheat straw which should only last 20 - 30 years
- Fine Hungarian reed resembles combed wheat straw in both texture and colouring; see Fig 5
- In future years it would prove interesting to compare the condition of the combed wheat straw roof of the old cottage with the water reed roof of the new cottage
- The top coat is easy to remove should future results disappoint
- The new cottage is of no historical interest and is only listed since it falls within the curtilage of the old cottage
- The thatched roof is of post-war construction and offers little archeological interest
- The roof of the new cottage makes a minimal visual impact on the surrounding area, see also under section 'Appearance' below.

Encircling the new cottage in counter clockwise direction, the roof area and its surroundings are shown as follows. Starting from St Peters Road only a small western facing part of the roof is visible on the right in Fig 1. The southern slope along Clovelly Road is almost entirely obscured by trees; see Fig 2. The Eastern and Northern roof slopes are only visible from the Meadowsweet garden and are depicted in Figs 3 and 4 respectively. Only from here might any differences between roof materials be discerned.

Amount

To maintain visual parity between both Meadowsweet cottages, only the outer layer of the newer cottage roof is to be replaced with a sparred-on coat of water reed, to produce a roof of similar thickness, contours and looks as the roof of the older cottage.

Layout

No change.



Scale

No change.

Landscaping

No change.

Appearance

Since small gauge Hungarian water reed resembles combed wheat so much in texture and shape, it should be very difficult to distinguish the two roofs. For further detail see also under 'Context' above. An example of a cottage thatched by Matthew Holt is shown in Fig 5: the older roof on the left is thatched in combed wheat whereas the newer roof on the right is thatched in Hungarian water reed.

Access

Access is freely available from Clovelly Road into to the rear garden adjacent to the cottage. This is the same access point which will also be used for the imminent re-thatching of the older Meadowsweet cottage.



Fig 2 Southern Aspect: View from St Peters Road



Fig 3 Eastern Aspect: View from Meadowsweet Garden



Fig 4: Northern Aspect: View from Meadowsweet Garden



Fig 5: Two different roofs: Combed Wheat on left, Water Reed on right