

## DC Admin

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**From:** Thomas Whitfield <thomas@georgiangroup.org.uk>  
**Sent:** 24 September 2025 08:01  
**To:** DC Admin  
**Cc:** Conservation Design  
**Subject:** Case 2025/92388 - Red House Museum, 281 Oxford Road, Gomersal

### Categories:

Dear Nina Sayers,

Thank you for notifying The Georgian Group of application 2025/92388 for a scheme of works to convert The Red House Museum, 281 Oxford Road, Gomersal from 3no. residential units. The Group registers no objection in principle to the conversion however we raise the following concerns with the proposed scheme of works.

Red House is a multiphase gentry house with the earliest phases dating from c.1660. The building was refaced and remodeled during the mid-late eighteenth-century c.1770s notably being refaced and with the formation of a double height entrance hall. The building has subsequently undergone a number of interior and exterior alterations and additions including extensions and the formation of an arcade in the GF entrance hall. A barn-cum-cloth hall (possibly as a result of later alteration) was also constructed c.1773 with a peculiar large central window opening at 1F level to admit light to illuminate the cloth inside. A range of cart houses adjacent to the barn was constructed c.1850.

The application is for a scheme of internal and external works to convert the house to form 2no. residential units and the barn to 1no. residential unit.

### Advice and Comments

As noted above, The Group registers no objection in principle to the proposed use of the buildings as residential units. We additionally acknowledge that as a result of pre-application discussions, the applicant has reduced the proposed total number of units from 5no. to 3no.

The Group advises that our statutory remit is to comment on works affecting built fabric dating c.1700 to c.1840. Accordingly, we focus our below advice on works affecting built fabric of this date. For works affecting fabric outwith our statutory date range, we defer to consultees from the other National Amenity Societies, the LPA Conservation Officer, and Historic England.

### House

The Group overall welcomes the proposals to bring Red House back into sustainable use, and we consider that residential use is a good viable option for this.

We recognise that the applicant has endeavoured to make the proposed interventions as unintrusive and sensitive as possible, however we raise concerns with some of the proposed subdivision works.

### Ground Floor

The Group queries the need for the proposed lobbies/corridors at ground floor labelled Items 4 and 11 on the as proposed plans. We advise that these erode the historic planform of the building, weakening legibility of historic access patterns and room volumes. We can find no clear or convincing justification for these works

under the requirements of NPPF (2024) paragraph 213 and we consequently recommend that they are deleted from the application.

The Group likewise queries the need for, and proposed location of the WC/cloak room (item 13). We recommend that subdividing the room and forming a new opening to access the WC and Cloakroom would cause harm through loss of historic fabric from a probable primary phase wall and would further erode the already altered planform and room volume of the dining room.

#### *First Floor*

The Group registers some concern with the proposal to form a family bathroom by introducing a stud partition across the middle of a probable primary phase chimneybreast with later fireplace (Item 11). We advise that we can find no assessment of the significance of the room in the applicant's heritage assessment and likewise no meaningful discussion of the impacts of this element of works in the applicant's heritage impact assessment.

We advise that we are consequently unclear whether the existing fireplace is of any historic significance and we accordingly draw attention to the requirements of NPPF paragraphs 207 and 208.

We advise that introducing stud partitions across the middle of chimneybreasts and fireplaces invariably causes harm eroding the legibility of historic room volumes and planform, and diluting the historic character of rooms. Whilst we recognise that the room has already been partitioned to create a corridor with a stud wall of uncertain date (presumed modern in the HIA), this adjoins the corner of the existing chimneybreast, presumably leaving the fireplace clear in a more sympathetic manner than the partition proposed.

We recommend that further discussion of the significance of the chimneybreast, fireplace and existing room volume are discussed in greater detail with an heritage impact assessment submitted.

#### ***Barn***

The Group raise no objection in principle to the conversion of the barn to single residential use. We do however register significant concerns with the amount of subdivision proposed with the form of the proposed replacement windows and with the proliferation of rooflights to the rear roof slope.

#### *Windows*

The Group immediately registers concerns that the proposed window replacements are to be in a significantly different materials palette and pane arrangement. The Group acknowledges that the existing windows are non-historic units, and we raise no objection to their being replaced, however we strongly recommend that this should be like for like in materials and design.

We advise that the window arrangement to the barn contributes strongly to its historic character and architectural significance, and they offer strong legibility of the historic significance of the Red House complex more generally as being involved in the textiles industry. The ocular windows and central mullioned window provide a strong and clear indication of the historic use of the building as an unusual historic combination of barn and cloth inspection/finishing space.

Changing the materials and design of the windows would consequently cause significant harm to the building's historic character and special architectural and historic significance, denuding its evidential, aesthetic and group values. We advise that this is contrary to the requirements of the NPPF paragraph 212. We furthermore advise that it is neither clearly nor convincingly justified under the terms of paragraph 213. We accordingly also highlight the requirements of section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 that LPAs also have a duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas.

We recommend that any replacement windows should be like for like to the existing in terms of materials and design.

The Group additionally recommends that timber doors should be retained or reinstated (either functional or fixed) to help preserve the historic character of the barn.

#### *Internal Works*

The Group registers concerns with the proposed intensive subdivision of the first floor. The first-floor space was historically an open plan room to allow for cloth inspection and finishing. The extent of subdivision proposed, however, severely erodes the legibility of this historic function, creating a highly cellular arrangement which is quite at odds with the historic layout. Whilst we recognise that there will need to be some division at 1F level, we recommend that this is minimised as far as possible.

We particularly advise that the proposed bathroom and ensuite in the centre of the first floor are especially incongruous and disruptive to the legibility of the historic open planform and do not give the due great weight to the asset's conservation as required under NPPF paragraph 212.

We furthermore advise that it is not clearly justified why the building requires 2no. ensuites and a family bathroom at 1F, plus a w/c at GF level (total 4no. toilets) to serve 4no. bedrooms. We advise that we do not consider that this is justified under the terms of NPPF paragraph 213.

We strongly recommend that the applicant explores alternative arrangements whereby either the number of proposed bathrooms is reduced, or the proposed bathroom facilities could be less intrusively accommodated elsewhere, perhaps a family bathroom instead of the proposed study.

### *Rooflights*

The Group notes that rooflights are only proposed to the rear roofslope which is largely hidden by tree cover however we do note that there are some partial views from Pollard Way and from houses on Pollard Way. We accordingly also highlight the requirements of section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 that LPAs also have a duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas.

We advise that the number and the irregular spacing and positioning of the proposed rooflights is assertive and visually intrusive impacting negatively on the historic character of the barn.

We advise that the rear elevation of the barn is a well ordered and austere elevation with the slot-breathers/windows spaced with rigid regularity giving the elevation a highly ordered and regular character. The proposed rooflights by contrast are irregularly spaced and positioned conflicting with the historic regularity of the elevation.

The number and arrangement proposed for the rooflights is, by our understanding, due to the need to provide natural light to the proposed bathroom facilities and internal corridors. We advise that this could be best mitigated by reconsidering the internal layout to allow bathrooms to be better lit existing windows/slot breathers, reducing the need for so many rooflights

We therefore recommend that alternative internal arrangements are explored to reduce the need for so many and such awkwardly arranged rooflights.

### *Extension*

The Group registers no objection in principle to the proposed extension; however we strongly recommend that an extension should be used to reduce pressure on the existing listed building by accommodating awkward and ancillary needs. We advise that the proposed extension does not do this and that instead much of the ancillary needs for a residence (utility, WCs etc) are located within the envelope of the historic building.

We likewise advise that the subdivision of the southern room at GF level to create a snug and corridor is an inefficient use of space creating a dark internal room. We furthermore raise concerns that it is proposed to form 2no. new openings in the historic rear elevation. It is however not clearly explained or justified why 2no. elevations are needed, and we advise that having 2no. openings will only serve to make the corridor [subdivided from the snug] an even less used space.

We recommend that the applicant revises the proposals to investigate alternative planforms which better support and are more sympathetic to the significance of the barn as a listed building. We recommend that if an extension is to be considered necessary it should work harder to reduce the need for harmful and intrusive alterations within the listed barn.

### **Conclusion**

When making a decision on all listed building consent applications or any decision on a planning application for development that affects a listed building or its setting, a local planning authority must have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. Preservation in this context means not harming the special interest of the building, as opposed to keeping it utterly unchanged. This obligation, found in sections 16 and 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (1), applies to all decisions concerning listed buildings. Under section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 they also have a duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas.

The Group advises that the application is for an intensive and extensive scheme of alterations which have the potential to cause significant and irreversible harm Red House's, including the barn's, special architectural and historic significance as a Grade II\* listed heritage asset.

The Georgian Group must therefore strongly recommend that the applicant withdraws the application and revises it to address the abovementioned concerns and objections, as well as those of other consultees. If the applicant is unwilling to do so, listed building consent should be refused.

We would be pleased to be notified of any further revisions or amendments to the scheme. We also advise that we would be pleased to meet with the applicant and other stakeholders on site to discuss our concerns further.

Yours sincerely,

**Dr. Thomas Whitfield**

Senior Conservation Adviser (Northern England)



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**Georgian Group Heritage at Risk List 2025: Call for nominations.**

We are now beginning to compile a new Georgian Group Heritage at Risk list for 2025. You can nominate any Georgian heritage building or landscape (regardless of listed status) which you consider to be 'at risk' by e-mailing [atrisk@georgiangroup.org.uk](mailto:atrisk@georgiangroup.org.uk). The deadline for entries is 26 September 2025.

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