03/3609/HOT

LONDON BOROUGH OF
RICHMOND UPON THAMES
2 - DEC 2003
PLANNING

re. BUSHY PARK HOUSE 1 - 3 SANDY LANE HAMPTON WICK SURREY

PLANNING AND LISTED BUILDING CONSENT APPLICATIONS

9.00 TFT CULTURAL HERITAGE SURVEY 13/09/03 EXTRACT

SECTION 1.3 - 'THE SITE AND BUILDINGS'

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 INSTRUCTIONS

In accordance with your instructions confirmed by us in our letter dated 28 August 2002, an inspection of Bushy Park House and the Thatched Cottage was made on 4 September 2002.

Your instructions were for us to provide you with a detailed report upon the condition of the structure and fabric of the two houses, integrating into this the findings of an inspection of the thatched roof covering that was to be undertaken by an experienced thatcher, Keith Paine, on the same day. Our inspection was limited to a visual examination of accessible and unconcealed elements of the structure and fabric. No other form of examination or testing was undertaken and no calculations have been made in support of any statement made within this report at this stage.

Accordingly, we have produced this report which is provided for your information only and without liability to any other party.

1.2 GENERAL REMARKS

Although a preliminary visit to the property had already been made on 27 August 2002, our main inspection of the site and buildings was – as noted above - undertaken on 4 September 2002. The survey commenced at 9.30am and was completed shortly after 4.30pm. For the first two hours, access was not available to the interior of either part of the property.

The weather during our inspection was sunny and dry, although there was light dew remaining in the first hour or so of our time on site. Preceding days had generally been dry and there had not been any significant rainfall for at least 10 days.

At our suggestion, an experienced thatcher, Keith Paine, attended the property on the same day to make a close examination of the thatched roof covering. A long ladder was hired for his inspection, allowing him access to material at the base of the roof slopes, as well as providing sight of various valley areas between adjacent roof slopes which were not visible from ground level. For ease of reference, his findings have been incorporated within the text of this report.

Our own inspection of the building was undertaken from ground level, using binoculars and a standard length surveyor's ladder, where appropriate.

Numerals in parentheses in the following text refer to photographs, which are bound on separate sheets throughout the report.

1.3 THE SITE AND BUILDINGS

Bushy Park House and the Thatched Cottage are located at grid reference TQ 171 687 in the parish of Hampton Wick in the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames.

It has been suggested that, historically, the two houses were constructed and, for a considerable period, used as a single dwelling. This will be discussed again below. It is not evident from the built fabric accessible at the time of our inspection when this property was subdivided into two. It is to be assumed, however, that the freeholder retains documentary evidence that could establish this, if so required. The two houses have separate postal addresses, being nos. 1 & 3 Sandy Lane, for Bushy Park House and the Thatched Cottage respectively. For the purposes of this survey report, and mindful of the intention to restore the building to its former arrangement as one dwelling house, wherever possible the property will be discussed hereinafter as though it were a single structure.

The property lies on the west side of Sandy Lane and on the eastern fringe of Bushy Park. The front elevation of the house faces east-north-east, although for ease of reference, it will be termed the east elevation in the following text. All directional references given in this report will be based upon this assumed bearing.

The site is essentially level, as is indeed is the general locality. The River Thames is, we believe, the nearest waterway of any significance – lying some 750 metres to the east of the house. We are not aware of any specific risk of flooding to the site, although you may wish to check this with the appropriate office of the Environment Agency.

Today, the principal buildings at the property consist of Bushy Park House (which, when discussing the condition of individual elements in Section 3 of this report will be referred to by the acronym 'BPH'), the adjoining Thatched Cottage ('TC'), and various single storeyed timber and concrete framed outbuildings to the south and north of the main building.

The main building consists of two principal storeys, with a basement or lower ground floor beneath the greater part of Bushy Park House and continuing below a small section of the Thatched Cottage at its southern end. The easternmost ground floor spaces within the Thatched Cottage lie within a single storeyed structure, as do the utility room and kitchen at its northern end. There is a conservatory abutting the southern end of Bushy Park House.

Bushy Park House and the Thatched Cottage constitute a single Grade II listed building. Grade II listed status applies to buildings of "special interest, which warrant every effort being made to preserve them". Government guidance has recommended for listing "all buildings built before 1700 which survive in anything like their original condition" and "most buildings of 1700 to 1840....though selection is necessary". The legislation relating to listed buildings (in 2002, primarily the *Town & Country Planning Act 1990* and the *Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990*) requires prior consent from

the local authority for any change that will materially affect the character of the building. Generally, this requirement tends to exclude works of maintenance and repair of small scale where matching materials and techniques are to be applied; hence, in most instances, these can be undertaken without the need for consent from the local authority. However, this will not be the case for many more substantive repairs or for those where matching materials are not to be used. The notion of "character", and hence protection under the legislation, extends to and encompasses everything contained within the curtilage of the listed building (here being defined by its principal boundaries), including all outbuildings, garden walls and other such objects and structures constructed before 1 July 1948.

The listing description for the house (actually, the two properties are listed jointly, whilst being referred to as separate dwellings), drafted, it would appear, without access to its interior, is as follows:

Late C18 or early C19. Picturesque semi-detached houses in "cottage orne" style. Perhaps originally one house. Each 2 storeys, 3 windows. Roughcast with thatched roof and patterned cement chimneys. Fancy "Gothic" glazing to windows. Bushy House has double bayed front onto Bushy Park and single full height projecting bay.

Interestingly, they are recorded in the list description under the names 'Bushy House' and 'The Thatched House'.

In respect to the historical development of the house, the sales particulars state that "*the property was completed around 1824 as a single house, including Thatched Cottage, although it is considered that work commenced in the late 18th century*". We do not know the source of this information, although certainly we found nothing on site during our inspection that would dispute that approximate date of construction. It is possible that historical research has been undertaken on which the agent's comments are based. If that is the case, it would be useful to obtain a copy for future reference, before your purchase is completed. Our only doubt about the notion that the property was designed and conceived as one house rests for the moment on three slightly incongruous characteristics: the marked break in ridge line and height between the two halves of the roof, the distinctly contrasting ambiance and quality of apparently early fittings and ornament between the two, and the discontinuation of the lower ground floor (or, more properly perhaps, the cellar) beneath the greater part of the Thatched Cottage argue for the two houses as having been planned, designed and constructed at quite separate times. As will be seen later in this report, certain elements of the house – particularly, the present roof line and thatched covering to Bushy Park House – are not what they seem superficially, but this takes us no nearer resolving the fundamental dilemma and uncertainties surrounding the historical development of the building.

Accommodation in the property has been defined within the particulars produced by Cluttons, the vendor's agents, as follows (with some minor adaptations):

<u>Bushy Park House</u>

Ground Floor	reception hall, drawing room, sitting room, conservatory;
Lower Ground Floor	dining room, kitchen, cellar, store room;

Mezzanine	bathroom;
First Floor	landing, bedrooms 1, 2 & 3;
<u>Thatched Cottage</u>	
Ground Floor	open porch, entrance hall, dining room, sitting room, kitchen, utility room, drawing room;
Lower Ground Floor	WC;
First Floor	bathroom, bedrooms 1& 2.

This nomenclature will be utilised in this report to prevent confusion.

The Agent's sale's particulars for the property incorporate floor plans, which are reproduced at the end of this section for convenience.

According to the Agent's particulars, the property has been associated with the Crown since the early 1800s. We understand that the vendor is the Crown Estate Commissioners, and that the property is to be leased for a term of 125 years with vacant possession. We have not seen a copy of any documentation relating to the lease and we cannot comment upon the appropriateness of intended conditions of the agreement. It is vital that you obtain legal advice on this matter to ensure that you do not accept onerous or detrimental conditions, without understanding their import and consequence.

1.4 LIMITATIONS

As we explained in our terms of engagement, generally, we were not able to inspect those parts of the structure and fabric which were covered, unexposed or inaccessible at the time of our inspection, and, therefore, we are unable to confirm that such parts are either adequate for their intended purpose or free from defect.

At the time of our survey, both Bushy Park House and the Thatched Cottage were occupied, and fully furnished and carpeted. This did prevent access to a significant number of wall, floor and joinery surfaces. Similarly, stored items in the roof void precluded satisfactory examination of certain areas and parts of the structure. No access was available to the roof voids over the Thatched House or to subsidiary roofs, generally.

The external staircase exit from the dining room (BPH) has been sealed shut – from the outside, with a felted timber or other cover and, internally, by padlocking of the door and the application of adhesive sealing tape around the perimeter of the frame. The reasons for this action were unclear, but it leaves a substantial unventilated void which could not be inspected.