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BRIDGE FARM, ASH STREET, SEMER
HERITAGE, DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

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Associated Documents & Drawings

00A Location Plan
01C Existing Plans and Elevations
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08A Window & Door Details

1.0 Introduction

This statement has been prepared to accompany a listed building application for a first floor extension and internal reordering at Bridge Farm, Ash Street, Semer.

The application is a resubmission of a withdrawn application (DC/21/00720 & DC/21/00721) following comments received from the conservation officer.

2.0 Setting & Context

Bridge Farm is located on the eastern side of Ash Street, a small hamlet to the south-east of the village of Semer. The property is situated in the north-western corner of a large plot of land surrounded by residential properties to the north with open land extending east, west and south. A water course runs along the southern boundary.

The property is Grade II Listed, its description reads as follows (Historic England):

TM 04 NW 38/935

SEMER ASH STREET (east side) Bridge Farm The Old Hall

(Formerly listed as Bridge Farmhouse, ASH STREET) 23.1.58

GV II A C16-C17 timber-framed and plastered building with a cross wing at the south end which is extended by a wing to the east making an L-shaped plan. Roof tiled. The timber framing is exposed on most of the front. Two storeys. The upper storey of the cross wing is jettied on the front on carved brackets, and exposed joists. There are no windows on the west front of the main block. The cross wing has small casements. There is a ridge chimney stack with saw-tooth shafting.

Listing NGR: TM0104346526

Other listed buildings lie within the vicinity including Spring Cottage (Grade II) a small C17-C18 timber-framed and plastered building with a tiled roof and Corner Cottage (Grade II) a C17-C18 timber-framed and plastered building with a tiled roof.

The attached adjacent barn and outbuildings are not listed but considered to be curtilage listed.

3.0 Existing Building & Site

The principal dwelling and historic core of the building stands over two-storeys immediately adjacent to the road providing an imposing view as approached from the south. A single storey range extends to the north wrapping round to the east to form a courtyard with large brick barn to the east. A swimming pool sits within the courtyard. Further stables and agricultural buildings have been added lying to the north of a large pond.

The barns and outbuildings now form holiday lets and have shared access to the swimming pool, along with the main house.

As noted in the heritage, design and access statement produced by Beech Architects (2016) for an earlier application in 2016 the building was subject to extensive renovation works in the mid-1990s which involved the replacement of large sections of the timber frame. The photo showing the extents of the works is shown below.



1990s restoration works - Beech Architects (2016)

Subsequent renovations and alterations include the conversion of the rear ranges and barn to holiday accommodation.

Planning History:

DC/21/00720 - Householder Application - Erection of two storey front extension; Erection of first floor extension to create new access to first floor rooms; Insertion of 2no. conservation rooflights to roof and new doors (Withdrawn)

DC/20/04161 / DC/20/04162 - Removal of a modern timber fence in a state of poor repair to be replaced with a brick garden wall with timber gated entrances. (Granted)

B/16/00413 - Alterations to north wing of dwelling including internal remodelling and layout alterations, alterations to door and window openings, replacement of doors, upgrade to thermal envelope, installation of log burner and flue pipe and associated external landscape works. (Granted)

B/11/01395 - Application for Certificate of Lawfulness of an Existing Use- of 'The Old Barn' as a single dwelling house (Class C3) (Withdrawn)

B//02/00783 / B/02/00782 - Erection of link extension between residential outbuilding and existing tack room, and porch extension(all in connection with conversion of these buildings to two units of holiday accommodation). As amended by drawing received on 16/07/02. As further amended by letter and drawing nos. 3174 09, 06c and 08c received on 02/08/02. (Granted)

B//98/00967 – Notification under Part 6 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 - erection of an open sided implement store

B//91/00944 / B/LB/91/00943 - Erection Of Entrance Lobby, Rear Stair Turret And Conservatory, Conversion Of Outbuildings And Barn To Additional Living Accommodation And Erection Of Boundary Wall And Block Of 7 Stables And Tackroom

4.0 Proposals

The proposals comprise the extension of an existing single storey unit built up to first floor level with new pitched roof over. The ground floor space will consist of a spacious entrance lobby, a new staircase acting as a central focal point. The existing W/C is to be reconfigured and enlarged to form shower room immediately adjacent to the staircase while a larder is to be created next to the kitchen. A short corridor will lead to a new boot room. Beyond, the space is to be used as a study. The existing double glazed doors are to be removed and the opening reduced in size to form a single doorway. 2no. conservation rooflights are to be inserted into the existing roof. The new staircase will rise to a walkway at first floor level to give access to an existing room through a new doorway. A conservation rooflight is to be insert into the new western roof pitch and a new window to the northern gable.

At first floor level the existing window to the external gable is to be removed and the opening blocked. The window is to be transferred to the inner truss increase light to the inner bedroom.

4.1 Justification & Mitigation

The proposals aim to improve the current layout in a number of ways. The general layout of the property as a whole; the sweeping driveway extending to the rear of the property where the courtyard opens out surrounded by the rear range and barn has altered the arrangement of the main building whereby the side door to the rear single storey range is now considered the principal entrance to the building. The raising of the existing single storey to full height will allow for the use of this room as a light and spacious formal entrance hall the addition of new timber windows and a rooflight allowing light ingress at ground and first floor level.

The insertion of a staircase and walkway to a newly created door opening in the end gable will also improve circulation within the building. The proposals aim to provide independent access to Bedroom 2, not only improving useability but also offering a formal means of escape.

Currently the useability of the end bedroom at first floor level is severely limited, the only access provided by a low level opening (underside of beam stands at 1075mm above finished floor level) on the internal dividing truss via Bedroom 1.



Existing low level opening between Bedrooms 1 & 2 – This opening is to be maintained.

The existing window to the gable will be repositioned at high level either side of the central post preserving the existing window whilst improving light levels within the inner bedroom.

Internal alterations at ground floor level include the reconfiguration of an existing W/C and the creation of a new larder and boot room all easily accessed from a short corridor. The room beyond is to be used as a study. The current double glazed doors fronting onto the swimming pool are to be removed and replaced with the single solid door improving privacy whilst maintaining access / egress. To account for the loss of light 2no. conservation roof lights are to be inserted into the existing roof.

Externally the alterations, wherever possible remain sympathetic to the existing building. Comments and advice from the conservation officer have been taken into account to ensure the impact of the proposals are minimal. The existing entrance is to be maintained; the flanking window is to be replaced with a larger example mirroring the form of existing to allow for greater light ingress.

The increased eaves height falls between that of the historic core and the single storey range maintaining the transition between the two elements as well as highlighting this alteration as a new phase of development. The choice of materials to match the existing ensures that the impact on the surrounding elements is limited and sympathetic to the building as a whole.

4.2 Appearance

Alterations to the appearance of the building are limited mainly to the increased wall / roof height to the single storey range at the junction with the historic core. A number of door & window openings are to be altered, replaced with timber examples that mirror those existing.

The existing single storey range will be built up in brickwork to eaves level below that of the adjacent timber framed building on the east whilst the western pitch falls to stand just proud of the eaves to the single storey range.

The extension sits kindly at the junction between the two earlier phases minimising the overall impact on the historic core.

4.3 Use

This application relates to the principal private residence of Bridge Farm. The first floor extension will allow for the creation of a spacious entrance hall allowing access to functional rooms at ground floor level whilst a new staircase and walkway will render an existing bedroom useable.

4.4 Scale, Amount & Layout

Externally the proposed extension aims to have a minimal impact on the existing building while internally providing much needed improvements. The first floor extension follows the footprint of the single storey range. The height of the extension has been minimised to ensure that the scale is in proportion with the existing building.

4.5 Materials

The materials have been chosen to accord with the existing building and to be sympathetic to their surroundings.

The brickwork to the first floor walls are to match existing and the roof will be finished with clay pantiles as the existing roof finish to the single storey range.

The windows and doors are to be formed of timber.

4.6 Access

Access to the property will remain as before, via the existing rear entrance door.

The existing glazed double doors are to be replaced by a single door opening maintaining access at this point.

Internally, access to Bedroom 2 will be greatly improved with a new doorway rendering the room useable and also offering a viable escape in case of a fire.

The vehicular access arrangements are to remain the same.

4.7 Landscaping

There are no landscaping plans as part of these proposals.

4.8 Consultation

The current proposals have been discussed with Tegan Chenery and the comments and advice received have been incorporated into the extension design. The current revised scheme has been given positive feedback and a re-submission has been encouraged.