

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Erection of a single-storey rear extension

Swallow Cottage, Drury Lane, Ridgewell, Halstead, Essex CO9 4SJ

June 2021

Introduction

This Statement has been prepared on behalf of my clients to support their householder planning application for the erection of a single-storey rear extension to their property, as well as the enlargement of an existing ground floor rear window.

Reference should be made throughout to the drawings supporting this application.

The existing property

The property is a two-storey semi-detached cottage with additional loft conversion. The original part of the cottage was built in circa 1840 and a two-storey rear extension was added in 2000. The building is not listed but is located within a Conservation Area. The principle front elevation faces south-east onto Drury Lane and is set back from the road with a large front garden. A driveway is situated to the front of the house, leading to a single storey detached garage adjacent to the property. The property is of timber frame construction and has a rendered external wall finish with red clay roof tiles. All windows and doors in the property are painted timber framed.



Fig. 1 and 2 - Existing cottage when viewed from Drury Lane



Fig. 3 - Rear elevation of the existing cottage

Design Proposal

The proposal is to build a single-storey rear extension which would serve as the new kitchen to the property. The enlargement of an existing ground floor rear window is also proposed.

Use and Layout

The footprint of the existing kitchen is only 10.3 sqm and is a long and narrow space with limited potential for expansion. It is located within the original part of the building and thus has very low ceilings. Natural light entering this space is also restricted primarily to a single west facing window.

The proposed new extension seeks to create a larger open plan kitchen/dining space that would improve the interior arrangement and allow the property to be modernised to something more akin to contemporary living standards. A major requirement was to create a light and airy space that would maximise views out towards the large, mature rear garden. As such, extensive glazing has been incorporated into the proposed rear and side elevations to open the house up to the garden visually and to maximise natural daylight entering the property. A bi-fold door has also been conceived to effectively extend the living and entertainment areas of the property, in doing so creating a seamless experience between indoor and outdoor recreational space. Roof lights have also been incorporated into the design to allow a greater quantity of sunlight to enter the property which will further enhance the sense of space and thereby reduce reliance on artificial lighting. The additional space will also allow the kitchen to be modernised with contemporary and more energy efficient fixtures and fittings which will serve to improve the living standards of the occupants as well as their overall enjoyment and accessibility of the property as they transition into retirement.

Scale, Impact and Appearance

As the building lies within a Conservation Area, it was important to ensure the design of the extension remained unobtrusive and in keeping with the character and integrity of the existing cottage. External materials have been chosen to match the existing building throughout and the extension will be built using timber frame construction methods to suit the local vernacular. Existing features such as painted timber framed windows, prominent fascia boards and low level brickwork forming a plinth to the existing building will also be incorporated into the design. The extension has also been designed with a pitched roof to allow for higher ceilings internally and which helps to integrate the development visually within the existing surroundings.

The ground floor extension is unassuming in scale and its overall projection is modest and does not compromise the existing large garden to the rear. As illustrated on the *L70 Existing and Proposed Site Plans* drawing accompanying this application, the extension does not extend rearward beyond the existing building line set by the two-storey neighbouring property to the west at Homeleigh. The extension also does not encroach any further towards the boundary with the adjacent property at Fairview and follows the existing building line alongside the boundary edge. At an approximate ridge height of 3.3m it is not considered the single storey extension would reduce daylight and sunlight generally to neighbouring properties and its low profile ensures that the sense of garden openness when viewed from neighbouring properties is retained. There is no identifiable detrimental impact on neighbouring residential amenity.

A traditional all-glass conservatory addition to the existing cottage was considered during the design process but was soon determined as inappropriate given the proximity to the garden fence forming the boundary with Fairview and the issues regarding thermal efficiency of the building envelope and building services that such an addition would entail.

The small existing kitchen window situated below the first floor bathroom (See fig. 4) is currently blocked up and therefore the intention is that this will be opened up, enlarged and a replacement window fitted to match the existing bathroom above it as part of this application. The window will not be visible from any neighbouring property and therefore is deemed to have negligible impact.



Fig. 4 - Existing ground floor window below bathroom currently blocked up

Trees and Landscaping

The proposal does not involve the felling of any trees on the site and does not affect any neighbouring trees. The existing patio will be re-paved in materials similar to existing. Planting beds, external paved steps and grassed areas disturbed during construction will be reinstated.

Access

No changes to the existing front access will be made. This property is an existing private cottage in single occupation and as such does not have any particular access requirements. A pathway around the side of the proposed extension will be maintained to allow for cleaning and maintenance access.

Neighbour Consultation

Neighbour consultation has taken place with the owners of Fairview. There were no significant objections to the proposal.

Conclusion

Given the single-storey extension is towards the rear of the existing property and is not visible from Drury Lane, it is not considered that the proposal would have a significant harmful effect on the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. The proposed extension is modest in scale and its projection is respectful of neighbouring properties. The extension has been designed and will be constructed in materials sympathetic to those of the existing cottage and the overall scale and design of the proposed extension is subservient to the original dwelling.