

JOB NO 1906

**DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT  
&  
HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

TO SUPPORT AN APPLICATION FOR PLANNING AND LISTED BUILDING CONSENT FOR ALTERATIONS  
AND EXTENSIONS TO:

**NENE COTTAGE  
WADENHOE**

September 2021



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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

1.1 This statement has been prepared by Redbox Architects to accompany a Planning and Listed Building Consent application for a new two storey extension to Nene Cottage, Wadenhoe.

1.2 This statement should be read in conjunction with the following drawings:

1906-P01-SITE AND LOCATION PLAN

1906-P02-EXISTING CONDITIONS

1906-P03- PROPOSED PLANS

1906-P04- PROPOSED ELEVATIONS

1.3 This statement and the proposal drawings have been prepared following an historical analysis of the building as a heritage asset. This methodology of first analysing and understanding the heritage value of the asset then allowing this to inform the development of design proposals is in line with the guidance set out in the National Planning Policy Framework and in accordance with English Heritage's *Conservation Principles (2008)*. This document first sets out an assessment of Nene Cottage in terms of heritage value, then discusses the design proposals put forward in terms of their impact.

1.4 Pre Application Enquiry.

A pre-application enquiry was submitted in September 2019 – ref: 19/01029/QRY. This application was for a wider two storey extension in approximately the same location. The main concern identified in the pre-application was that the width of the extension was too impactful on the rear extension and that the roof pitch was consequently too shallow. Both of these issues have been resolved by narrowing the extension, raising the pitch of the roof and thus, minimising the impact on the rear elevation.

## **2.0 HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE ASSESSMENT**

2.1 Nene Cottage is located at the end of Church Street within the village of Wadenhoe and its conservation area, which sits to the south of the market town of Oundle. The village is bounded by the river Nene to the East and farmland /grazing parkland to the all other aspects. In order to fully appraise Nene Cottage as a heritage asset it must be considered as both an individual building and in the wider context of the village. The significance of the building will be evaluated using the following criteria:

- Historical/Evidential Value
- Aesthetic Value
- Communal Value

The assessment will comprise a mix of desktop investigations and physical on-site appraisals in order to fully establish a holistic understanding of the building's heritage significance.

## 2.2 Historical/Evidential Value

This relates to the elements that provide historical evidence about past human activity.

The village of Wadenhoe has two populated roads with many listed and historic buildings (agricultural and dwellings) which are encompassed by farmland / grazing land. There are over thirty listed buildings within the village dating back to C12 Church of St Michael and All Angels (Grade II\*) and include a variety of C18 stone houses along Church Street of which Nene Cottage is one. There is also a Schedule Monument encompassing the land surrounding the Church that is thought to have been the site of an Anglo Saxon or early medieval settlement.

Nene Cottage, in keeping with the village growth, has also developed over time. The north section appears to have a late C17 / early C18 origin, predating the neighbouring south section which is thought to be mid C20. Each section is constructed of local regular and coursed limestone with a thatched roof including eyebrow dormers. The main front façade has timber casement windows with glazing bars and vertical plank painted door, all under wooden lintels.

The side and rear elevations have experienced a variety of changes over the years, with adjusted openings, replacement windows and adjustments for services and penetrations. These modern refurbishments have diminished the historic value of this portion of the house. The C 20 section to the south of the house contains the kitchen, bathroom and a balcony with French doors to the bedroom above. The existing balcony is constructed of timber and is in a very poor state of repair (being structurally unsound) as are the doors and windows. Generally the house, both internally and externally is on a poor state of repair and is in some urgent need of work to make it both liveable and appropriate for modern living.

In summary the front elevation is of higher historical significance than any of the other elevations, which have all been adjusted or altered over time and are in poor repair. This principal front elevation also faces the street scene so must be considered a more integral part of the conservation area setting.



Fig 1. The front elevation from Church Street

## 2.3 Aesthetic Value

This relates to the appearance and form of the building and its relationship with its context.

The front façade of Nene Cottage is constructed in rural C18 style with cut limestone quoins and thatched roof covering including eyebrow dormer windows, which is in keeping with many of the buildings in the village. There are no further decorative embellishments or notable elements of construction. The building sits harmoniously within the village as part of the terrace lining the Church Street leading towards the river and opposite the village pub (C18) and village Hall (late C20).

All of the windows have been replaced over time. This includes the new French doors and window opening on the south elevation. The rear windows also do not match the front elevation and appear to have been replaced probably in mid C20 with the other works.



Fig 2. Side Elevation facing south.

In addition, many surface mounted services diminish the architectural quality of both the south and west elevations.

Internally the house had been inhabited by the same occupant for many years and has been vacant for some years. As such, it is now in need of repair and refurbishment to ensure that the fabric of the house can be preserved for the long term and does not decay further. Additionally, the house is in need of some modernisation to make it adequate for occupation.

There is a stone boundary wall to the street elevation with random coursed stone, domed topping and a timber gate. Other boundaries to the rear are modern timber and agricultural wire fencing. The area to the west of the garden is heavily treed, but there are no trees to the east of the site or within falling distance of the house.

## 2.4 Communal Value

This relates to the meaning that an asset has for the people who relate to it.

Nene Cottage is a residential dwelling and as such is likely to hold less communal value than public counterparts. Nevertheless, it will still have value to whomever has lived there throughout the building's life. During the desktop study a search was made for any notable occupants that by association may mean the building has a wider communal value, however no notable residents were found.

Whilst aesthetically the building holds value as part of the wider architectural setting, Nene Cottage itself is not considered a focal point of the village.

## 2.5 Summary

Holistically Nene Cottage is considered to have only moderate heritage value, due to the C20 additions to the original house. The front façade however, is of architectural and aesthetic merit as part of the village street scene and conservation area.

## 3.0 THE PROPOSALS

3.1 The proposals are to carry out minor alterations the existing fabric, to allow a new two storey extension to be added to the rear of the house. This will help to create a comfortable 21<sup>st</sup> century family home without causing undue harm to the historically significant building fabric or undermining the significance of the listed building.

3.2 The proposed alterations can be considered in the following elements:

- A) New two storey extension to the rear of the house.
- B) Replacing the existing balcony

3.3 The proposals are discussed below in terms of:

- i) Summary of Significance
- ii) Heritage Impact Assessment

3.4 **Proposal A** – New two storey extension to the rear of the house.

- i) Summary of Significance - The form of the building is significant as it describes the incremental growth of the house throughout its life, and this legibility must be preserved. The heritage value of the southerly section of the house however has been limited by the C20 additions. The kitchen and bathroom were added in mid C20 and are in poor repair. The existing stone work to the rear elevation is also poor and the windows are all C20 replacements.

The thatched roof is also in need of replacement. Whilst the roof and thatch appears to be homogenous across both parts of the house, it is in fact a C20 addition to the south section.

The retaining wall to the rear of the house is also a C20 addition and as such hold no heritage value.

- ii) Heritage Impact Assessment – This application seeks to move the existing kitchen in to the new extension so the a C21 kitchen facilities can be installed, better light can be provided to a highly functional area and better access can be provided to the garden areas. The extension has been located away from the neighbouring boundary and largely (almost entirely) against the C20 portion of the house. The existing western C20 kitchen window is proposed to be broken out to provide access to the new kitchen. This significantly minimises the impact on the existing house. As mentioned above, the impact on the roof will also be minimised as the new roof will only impact the newer portion of roof; which is in desperate need of re-thatching anyway to ensure the house remains weathertight.

Additionally, only a small new opening is required to the existing stair area to provide access to the new first floor. Since the pre-application enquiry comments, this impact has been minimised and to avoid damaging the stone work and C17 area almost completely – impacting the C20 area.

As the existing stone walls are in poor condition (requiring repair / repointing) and as the impact will almost entirely be placed on the C20 (south) section of the house, the impact of the breakthroughs and the connection of the extension will be minimised. The existing plan form of the building is not altered and can still be perceived for its historic context.

The new walls will be constructed in coursed limestone to match the existing house with cut stone quoins and timber lintels also to match the existing. The windows and doors will be painted timber with slimlite double glazing to match the existing front elevation windows. The thatched roof will be cut back to accommodate the new pantile roof and sliding dormer. The pantile roof and dormer design are taken from a neighbouring precedent two doors away – see Fig 3 By its nature, thatch needs to be replaced regularly, so the adjustments to the thatch can be easily accommodated. The selection of the pantile roof was not a concern raised in the pre-application enquiry.

The existing rear stone garden wall will need to be removed and a new stone retaining wall will replace it. As the wall is C20 and starting to fail structurally, this will not impact the heritage asset. The wall and the retained ground will be held back a minimum 1m from the house walls as is the existing condition. Where possible the stones will be reused or matched. Drainage channels and modern construction methods (behind the stone wall façade) will ensure that both the existing house and the new extension are well protected.

### 3.5 **Proposal B** – Replacement of the existing timber painted balcony.

- i) Summary of Significance – The balcony and associated door are a C20 addition so consequently has no historic significance.
- ii) Heritage Impact Assessment – The painted timber balcony is in an extremely poor state and has been condemned as beyond repair and dangerous. As such the proposal in to replace it with something of the same scale and size, but made of painted timber with some painted metal elements to provide adequate strength.

As the balcony is on the C20 extension, the heritage impact is nil and as the size, scale and finish of the balcony will be essentially 'like for like' the impact on the conservation area is also minimal.



Fig 3. Neighbouring house with same roof tile and dormer style



Fig 4. Existing derelict balcony in need of replacement

## **4.0 HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 4.1 The proposal is for a new two storey extension to Grade II Nene Cottage as described above.
- 4.2 The impact of the proposals on the building, as a heritage asset, is considered to be low and has been minimised where possible; in line with the original concerns raised by the pre-application enquiry. The proposed extension is located to the rear of the house and away from the conservation area and street scene, so its impact on the wider village is minimal. There are only two breakthrough points into the new extension, which have been located so as to minimise the impact on the older historic fabric of the house (almost entirely located so as to impact the C20 extension to the south section of the house). The existing plan form has been preserved and remains legible. The additional footprint sits within a grassed area of low significance along with a modern retaining wall in need of urgent repair. The new doors and windows will be timber painted with 12mm slimline double glazing – with the painted timber lintels all to reflect the existing house.
- 4.3 The impact of the proposal on the surrounding area, as a heritage asset, is considered to be low. The proposed rear extension will not be easily visible from the street scene and has been designed to have as little impact as possible on the house, its neighbours and wider village conservation area.

## **5.0 DESIGN & APPEARANCE**

- 5.1 Underpinning the proposals is an appreciation for the quality, historical importance and significance of Nene Cottage. The implementation of the proposals will ensure its optimum viable use for the long term.
- 5.2 The proposals have been prepared so that the new works do not detract from the legibility or aesthetic quality of the existing building.
- 5.3 The materials will be selected to be the same as or where unavailable to match as closely as possible with the existing – in accordance with Wadenhoe Village Design Statement. The proposed extensions will be both thermally efficient and in-keeping with the existing house aesthetic.

## **6.0 USE**

- 6.1 Nene Cottage is a single family residence and will remain unaltered in this regard.

## **7.0 AMOUNT & SCALE**

- 7.1 The proposed construction is of an amount and scale that is appropriate to the function of a modern family dwelling and will not be highly visible from the street scene.

## **8.0 LANDSCAPING & ECOLOGY**

- 8.1 No major alterations (other than earth removal) are proposed to the landscaping immediately surrounding the house. The retaining walls forming the patio area to the west and south will be located to suit the new form. The existing walled path area is already hard-scaped with concrete, which will be replaced with pavers. The stones from the existing retaining walls will be retained and reused and/or matched. The existing stone garden shed structure immediately behind the house is modern and contains asbestos so is consequently proposed to be removed.
- 8.2 No trees are proposed to be lost. Only small hedge and shrubs (mostly overgrown shrubs) are proposed for removal. There are not trees / canopies of trees within or close to the proposed extension.

## **9.0 ACCESS**

- 9.1 The vehicular access to the site and the existing pedestrian access will remain unchanged. As the parking requirements for a three bedroom house are the same for a two bedroom house, the existing parking for 2-3 cars is sufficient.

## **10.0 CONCLUSIONS**

- 10.1 The application has been carefully prepared giving due regard to the character and appearance of the existing building and its history.
- 10.2 The application complies with the requirements of current planning policy guidance as outlined in the National Planning Policy Framework. The significance of Nene Cottage as a heritage asset has not been diminished by the proposals.
- 10.3 The proposals are an important part of ensuring the continued optimum viable use of the listed building. As such, the proposals comply with the relevant guidance contained in the NPPF, local planning policy and the statutory requirements set by Sections 16 and 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

## 11.0 APPENDIX

### LISTING INFORMATION

Statutory Address: NENE COTTAGE, 34, CHURCH STREET

County: Northamptonshire

District: East Northamptonshire (District Authority)

Parish: Wadenhoe

National Grid Reference: TL010898339

TL0183 WADENHOE CHURCH STREET (North side)

9/219 No.34 (Nene Cottage)

GV II

House. Late C17/early C18 and mid C20. Regular coursed limestone with thatch roof. Originally 2-unit plan. Single storey with attic. 2-window range of casements, with glazing bars, under wood lintels. Similar casements under eyebrow dormers to attic. Plank door under wood lintel to right. Brick and stone stack at end. 2-window range to left, added mid C20, in similar style. Interior not inspected but noted as having ceiling beams. Included for group value.

Listing NGR: TL0108983393