

## Design & Access Statement

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Cotlee, Groton Street, Groton, Suffolk CO10 5EE

Prepared by:

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### Introduction

Cotlee forms part of a larger Grade 2 listed building (not situated within a designated conservation area) and benefits from additional accommodation provided within an existing rear annexe which received planning permission in 1997.

This application proposes a single-storey extension to the rear of the original dwelling providing a suitable family entrance and dining room area and linking it with the existing annexe accommodation beyond.

### Use.

The primary purposes of the proposed extension are: to provide a designated family dining area enjoying an open aspect onto the private gardens to the south; to allow internal connection to an accessible ground floor bedroom (existing within the current annexe), also with improved accessible ground floor bathroom facilities; and to create a more spacious and practical daily entrance into the home. The ground floor bedroom suite is used for extended periods of accommodation of an aged relative and is also sought for the long-term accessible use by the owners themselves.

The existing use as a single family dwelling house remains unchanged.

### Amount.

The proposals provide an additional net internal area of 25m<sup>2</sup> to the ground floor.

### Landscaping

Cotlee is addressed and accessed from the (south) side off Groton Street with a sloping driveway rising to its position a meter above road level. The side access and rear gardens have considerable privacy from Groton Street. All existing features to the street aspect of the dwelling remain unchanged: brick garden walling, established mature hedges, gravel driveway and vehicular gate, side porch entrance (current main entrance), lawns and planting. The location of the proposed extension is currently an area of shingle finish between the rear of the primary dwelling and the existing annexe and the proposals do not propose or remove any landscaping or planting features.

### Access.

Due to levels rising from the street, the existing main entrance within the porch along the south side of the dwelling has 2 steps up from outside. This entrance opens to a restricted space bounded by stairs beyond and internal doors to either side. From this limited landing, there are raised thresholds and steps to changing floor levels at rooms both front (lounge) and back (kitchen). There is currently a ground floor WC with shower located at the rear of the main dwelling whose fittings are cramped and restrictive. The proposals provide an alternative single-step side entrance further back where existing ground levels have flattened, with feasibility for future ramp as needed, and a more spacious internal entrance giving step-free access to the new dining area and ground floor bedroom within existing annexe beyond as well as forward into the main house. Linking the existing ground floor bedroom with the main house and providing a more accessible ground floor bathroom creates flexibility and longer-term viability for a more inclusive range of users.

### Layout.

The proposal is subtly composed of two forms; the first, the entrance, is set-back and is used to separate existing and proposed ancillary accommodation to the rear from the massing of the main dwelling to the front. The second form, the new dining room, lies parallel and to the front of the existing annexe.

### Scale and Appearance

Views from Groton Street through the existing garden walls with mature hedges to either side of the drive are fleeting. The prominence of the original dwelling to the front is visually reinforced by the rising ground level moving into the site from the road, which has the effect of diminishing views into the back towards the east and the existing annexe with proposed extension. The recessed entrance link connection sits fundamentally obscured directly behind the house, revealing itself only as you approach up the garden towards it. The flat-roof form and height of the proposed extension have been kept minimal and sit intentionally in contrast and subservience to the significantly larger, sloping forms of the primary dwelling to the front. Unifying the proposed new extension and existing annexe behind with continuous dark, receding timber cladding, in contrast to the Suffolk yellow-based painted render of the main dwelling, further helps to diminish their forms and reinforces both their separation and subordination as rear ancillary accommodation at the back in scale, form and colour. Sections on the accompanying drawings for the proposals show that the flat roof of the new extension cannot undersail the low eaves of the existing modern annexe roof to the rear (as suggested as desirable in the pre-app comments) due to floor levels, construction thicknesses and head-height requirements. However it is thought that partially screening the existing annexe from views is beneficial and good detailing of the new flat roof to existing annexe pitched roof connection can ensure that this juxtaposition of forms is attractive and insignificant.

With the minor exceptions of opening 1 linear metre of rear external wall and parallel internal wall (see photos attached separately within application), as referred to within the Heritage Impact Assessment, the existing main dwelling is entirely maintained.