



Heritage, Design and Access Statement

Two Storey Rear Extension

Witchtree Farm, Witchtree Lane, Hempstead, CB10 2PN



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1. Introduction

- 1.1. This Heritage, Design and Access Statement has been prepared on behalf of the applicant, Mr R Cook, in support of a householder planning application for a two-storey rear extension at Witchtree Farm, Hempstead, CB10 2PN.
- 1.2. The Applicant has recently taken ownership of the property and now seeks to provide additional space to allow this building to function as a modern family home.
- 1.3. This application has been prepared in consideration of the adopted Local Plan policies, namely:
 - Policy ENV2, which considers development affecting Listed Buildings. This policy seeks to development to be in keeping with the scale, character and surroundings of the Listed Building.
 - Policy GEN2, which considers design also requires design to: be compatible with the scale, form, layout, appearance and materials of surrounding buildings; safeguard important environmental features in its setting; to meet the reasonable needs of all potential users.
- 1.4. This application is also supported by an Arboricultural Impact Assessment that found that the site has no high-value trees.
- 1.5. This statement will introduce the proposed scheme and the key planning and heritage considerations.

2. Heritage

- 2.1. This Heritage, Design and Access Statement has been prepared in line with the guidance set out in Paragraph 194 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which states:

In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance (NPPF 2021).

Stage 1. Background of the Heritage Asset

- 2.2. Witchtree Farm, Hempstead is a Grade II Listed Building (1230676).
- 2.3. The farm is located in an isolated position along the lane, and is set within extensive grounds.
- 2.4. The farmhouse is a simple vernacular building of 16th century origin, but with significant alterations in the 19th century. It is characterised by the use of render, irregular opening placements and asymmetrical roof. Two chimney stacks project from the roof line and are likely to be a later a later 19th century addition as these were rarely seen on vernacular buildings prior to this.



Image 1: Front Elevation

- Rendered exterior
- Single storey lean-to, added in the 1980s.
- Asymmetrical roof shape





Images 2&3: Side and Rear Elevation

- Rendered exterior
- Two chimney stacks
- Undated 20th century single-storey rear extension
- Asymmetrical roof shape
- Property set within extensive grounds
- Telegraph pole and cable crosses the site
- Extensive landscaping



Image 4: Downstairs Sitting Room

- Exposed timber on walls and ceiling – characteristic of each room. Including bressummer.
- Brick fire place



Image 5: Upstairs bedroom

- Exposed timber on walls and ceiling – characteristic of each room. Including bressummer.
- Irregular rooms shapes, uneven floors, low ceiling heights.
- Irregular window opening placements.

2.5. The Listing entry states:

Timber-framed and plastered house of C16 origin but much altered in the C19 and later. Two storeys. Part of the upper storey is jettied on the north-east front, with original moulded bressummer. The windows are mostly modern casements. Roof slate. The interior has exposed timber-framing, ceiling beams and joists. (RCHM 34).

| Listing NGR: TL6386538927

- 2.6. Witchtree Farm has architectural and historic value as a vernacular building of the 16th and 19th century. The extensive setting adds to the interest, albeit the wider curtilage includes 20th century outbuildings and a telegraph pole and line that dissects the site.
- 2.7. The earliest map consulted for this study was the OS Six Inch Map of 1880 together with maps from 1951 and 1956 (NLS, 2023), see Appendix A. The site can be clearly identified in detail. The square shape of the listed building is shown surrounded by a number of scattered outbuildings. It is evident that the location of the outbuildings has changed and been replaced over the years. The existing piggery building is only identifiable for the first in 1956, not having been shown in the 1951 map. The existing garage is not shown in any of these maps. Other outbuildings appear to have been demolished since 1880, 1951 and 1956.

Stage 2: Impact Assessment

- 2.8. The characteristics of the proposed two-storey extension include:
- Removal of existing 20th century single-storey rear extension.
 - Two-storey rear extension separated from the main building to create a distinction between the new and original.
 - Extension and existing building to be linked by a corridor.
 - Extension to finished in render to reflect the character of the existing building.
 - Extension to provide a kitchen and dining area and utility room at the

ground level and bedroom and ensuite on the first floor level.

- Removal of a tree that is in very close proximity to the Listed Building.

Direct Impacts

- 2.9. The proposed extension will have a direct impact onto the fabric of the listed building. This will be confined to the rear elevation, where a small section of wall will be removed to enable the creation of a corridor to link the new and old elements.
- 2.10. The proposals will also remove an undated 20th century single-storey extension and restore that part of the elevation.
- 2.11. The proposals will remove a tree that is in close proximity to the existing building and represents a long-term risk to the building itself.

Indirect Impacts

- 2.12. The location of the proposed extension means that the principal and most significant elevation at the front of the house will remain unaffected and will not be seen from this viewpoint.
- 2.13. Whilst the proposed extension will be able to be seen within the rear garden area at Witchtree Farm, it would also be viewed in the context of the telegraph pole and cable.
- 2.14. The subordinate form, with its separation from the main building, linked by a corridor, should not alter the relationship with the building and the extensive grounds in which it sits.

- 2.15. In terms of design and materials, the proposal has sought to be subordinate to the listed building, whilst at the same time reflecting its values. Therefore, all new roofing material will use simple matching tiles, whilst the extension, will use render to reflect the main dwelling.

Stage 3. Justification

- 2.16. The proposed development's justification is to be able to ensure enough space to enable it to function as a family home, thereby securing its long-term future and preservation.

Rick Assessment

- 2.17. Witchtree Farm represents an isolated post-Medieval farm surrounded by agricultural land. The use as an agricultural farm has long ceased and that functional link has now passed. The simple farmhouse is set into its own separate plot and now demonstrates a clear distinction to the surrounding agricultural land.
- 2.18. Whilst the current proposals will impact the historic fabric of the listed building, this will be kept to a minimum. Furthermore, the individual values of the farmhouse have already been eroded through 20th century interventions.
- 2.19. The proposed new extension, by virtue of its location at the rear and subordinate appearance will not alter the historic value. In fact, the removal of an existing single storey element, will add benefit to the appreciation of the building when viewed from the rear.
- 2.20. The proposed extension to the main building would therefore preserve the character and significance of the listed building. By reason of its scale, footprint, massing and form,



the proposed extension would be subservient to the host listed building.



3. Planning Balance

- 3.1. This Planning Statement has demonstrated that the proposed extension would be compliant with the NPPF and the adopted Colchester Local Plan. Therefore, in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development in the NPPF, it is requested that planning permission is granted.

Appendix A: Historic Maps



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Ordnance Survey - Essex Sheet X
Surveyed: 1876 to 1877, Published: 1880



Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland
Ordnance Survey - Cambridgeshire Sheet LXIII.NW
Revised: 1946 to 1949, Published 1951



Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland
Ordnance Survey - TL63 - B
Publication date: 1956