

Design, Access and Heritage Statement

Site Address:

Bell Farm,
London Road,
Wickford,
Essex,
SS12 0LG

County:

Essex

District:

Basildon Council

The Site

The site is located to the South of London Road in a semi - rural location to the West of the main settlement of Wickford. The property has a plot of approximately 3000 sqm and has approximately 60m of frontage onto London Road. The property is located within a green belt but is not in a conservation area. The property is a grade II listed building (List Entry No. 1305927). The property was listed in 1975 and the listing describes it as:

“A C18 timber-framed and plastered farmhouse. 2 storeys. 3 window range, double-hung sashes with glazing bars. A central gabled porch projects on the front. Roof C20 composition tiles, hipped.”

The property at Bell Farm is a detached 2 storey 4 bedroom dwelling. The building is symmetrical in form comprising a central porch. The existing materials include a black painted brick plinth, white painted render with pargeting, and a slate tile roof. Windows and doors are black painted timber. The existing building has a footprint of approximately 101 sqm and GEA of 202 sqm.

Other buildings on site include a single storey detached gym / games room which has white painted render, black vertical cladding and a slate tile roof. This has a footprint of approximately 71 sqm. This is sited to the South East corner of the dwelling house.

There is also a series of landscaped areas including a semi enclosed brick wall with timber pergola structure over to the West of the property.

The Proposal

This application looks to demolish the side landscaping scheme to the West of the building and erect a single storey side extension to the property in its place. This landscaping area currently consists of a 1.8m high brick wall with white painted render. Shorter 1.2m walls return southwards from the taller 1.8m wall to create an enclosed area. There is a timber pergola structure on top of this.

The extension is to accommodate a new kitchen / dining room. This is to be attached to the listed building via a glass link and will utilise an existing opening (doorway) in the historic fabric to minimise the impact. This extension is to have a footprint of 48 sqm and will be finished with a soft red brick.

The design intent of this is that from the primary elevation (front) the extension will largely appear as a garden wall such as the one to the East of the property (between the detached games room / gym and main dwelling house). Therefore there will be no windows in this brick wall and it is intended that there will be planting in front to further disguise the extension. From the rear the extension is to be a significant contrast from the existing dwelling with large glazing and an overhanging roof structure to create a lightweight contemporary addition.

Scale

The scale of the proposed extensions has been significantly reduced following feedback from schemes previously submitted for pre application advice. The Total GEA is to increase from 273 sqm to 321 sqm, approximately a 18% increase. This is a reduction over the previously refused scheme (18/01685/FULL) that sought to increase the GEA to 362 sqm.

Due to the generous size of the plot, it is not believed that the extension would be overdevelopment and as the existing farm house is of substantial size in comparison to the extensions it is not felt that it would be overbearing.

Landscape and ecology

Much of the site is currently residential garden largely laid to lawn with planted bed area and various patio areas with a gravel driveway to the North (Front).

The proposal will have negligible difference to the onsite ecology due to the extension being built in places where there are existing areas of patio or landscaping features (aforementioned brick walling and pergola).

Appearance

The landscaping features to the West of the property contribute little to the visual appearance of the property. The side extension to replace this structure is to use materials seen elsewhere on the property and is to be as unobtrusive as possible from the front elevation. From the rear of the property the side extension is intended to provide a visual contrast with minimal glazing and a sleek overhanging roof.

Impact

The impact has been considered against 3 key factors - those concerning the greenbelt, the visual amenity and of which concerning the historic fabric.

The impact on the greenbelt is considered to be negligible. This is due to the fact that there is an existing garden wall in this position already and whilst the proposal does make this taller and wider, the front property has a 1.8m high timber fence running along the front boundary onto London Road and is heavily planted with mature shrubs and trees offering little to no view through into the property from the road side. We therefore do not believe that the side extension would have any perceivable change when viewed from the road and would not impact the open-ness of the greenbelt.

The impact on visual amenity has been carefully considered to ensure that the character of the existing symmetrical farmhouse is not negatively impacted. A series of decisions have been made to achieve this including sitting the extension back from the principle elevation by 1270mm, the absence of windows to ensure that the extension appears as a brick wall and that it is subservient in height to the main dwelling. Due to there being an existing brick wall in this location and a brick wall to the other side of the front elevation we do not believe this will have a negative impact on the front elevation.

The view on the heritage impact is based on feedback from previous pre application responses. The delegated report from application 23/00300/FULL implies that a side extension is considered acceptable.

We also believe that the siting of the extension to the side of the property will have a lesser impact on the existing dwelling as there are fewer openings on this elevation and it shall prevent the plan from becoming excessively deep which would be overbearing on the existing building and would negatively impact the character of the historic part of the building.

Access

Access is not changed under this application.

Waste

Waste storage and collection are not changed under this application.