

North Northamptonshire District Council

Design and Access Statement Including Heritage Impact

Demolition of rear extension, construction of extension over existing footprint, external alterations to windows and cladding including installation of solar panels to south elevation roof slope.

Application address:

2 Saffron Road

Higham Ferrers

Rushden

NN10 8ED

January 2024

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Introduction

This design and access statement (including impact and justification) has been prepared in support of an application for permission to demolish a single storey building and construct a new rear extension over the footprint. Works also include the part conversion of the existing roof space and upgrade of external materials at 2 Saffron Road, Higham Ferrers, Northamptonshire, NN10 8ED. The property is not listed.

The commercial property fronts onto Saffron Road with the western primary elevation facing onto the street. The level difference from the main building finished floor level to the highway edge is circa 200mm. There is a masonry boundary wall along the northern boundary. The garden of 2 Hind Stile faces onto the eastern boundary and is contained by a timber fence. The Post Office at 2 Wharf Road abuts the southern boundary.

External features of the property in question consist of a red brick primary facade facing the east, south and west. The north elevation is finished with pale sand cement render. The roof is finished with slates. External windows are a mix of uPVC and timber of varying styles.

Location

The property lies towards the West side of the Higham Ferrers Conservation Area but is immediately outside of the conservation area itself. Access is solely from the west, directly from Wharf Road. The site is considered to be just off the centre of Higham Ferrers town within a mixed use area of commercial, residential properties and school.



Fig 1 – OS map showing the Site and its immediate context (site noted with a red dot, conservation area hatched in green)

The Proposed Development

The proposal promotes the development of an existing site, bringing it back into a more efficient use through careful development, and helping to positively contribute to the town of Higham Ferrers.

It is considered the proposed improvements consist of a sustainable development in contributing to the economic sustainability of the town and in supporting the local economy.

The proposal is for the below alterations:

- Removal of run-down rear extension.
- Construction of new rear extension over demolished building footprint with useable space within the roof space.
- Installation of solar panels to the southern roof plane.
- Part conversion of the existing office roof space to form an integrated roof space with new rear extension.
- Upgrades and improvements to external materials as illustrated on submitted plans.
- Upgrades and improvements to external hard landscaping.

Layout

The proposed layout of the site as shown on the plans supporting the application, represents a sympathetic approach to creating a development which enhances the overall setting and appearance of the site in a manner in keeping with the historic nature of the site and nearby conservation area.

The site layout will remain relatively unchanged considering the proposed rear extension will be positioned over an existing extension which is to be removed as part of the proposal.

The existing hard surfaced parking area will be retained and improved.

Scale

The scale of development proposed is compatible with the existing form of development. The rear extension is to follow the heights of the existing building to be retained. Matching the ridge lines will allow for efficient use of the southern roof plane for installation of photovoltaic panels whilst allowing the internal roof spaces to be utilised with sufficient headspace.

Alterations to the existing front facing elevation and proposed roof shape are in keeping with the existing form of development on site and considered acceptable.

Design

The scheme illustrates the opportunity for an enhanced visual aspect to the site, utilising design which is sensitive to the heritage of the site and compatible with the character of the nearby conservation area. The front red brick facade will be retained and improved to improve visual appearance. Side and rear facing elevations are proposed to be clad in timber and stained to an approved colour.

Alterations to the south facing fenestration is proposed in order to improve visual appearance and unify the overall building design.

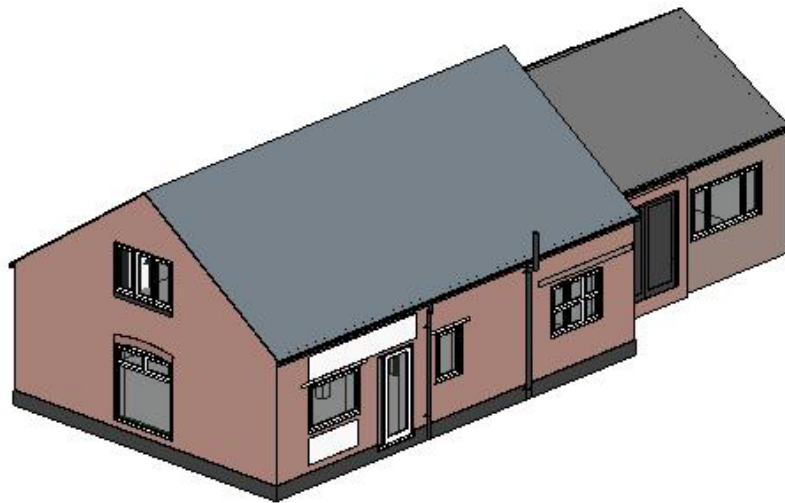


Fig 2 – Existing 3D View

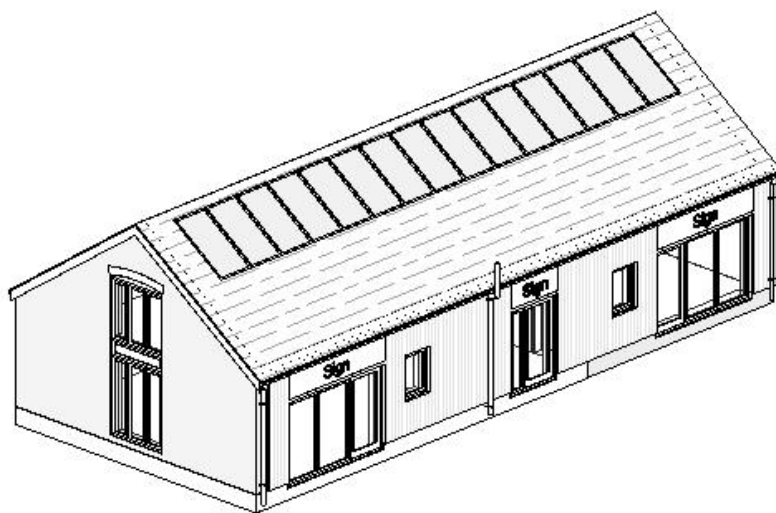


Fig 3 – Proposed 3D View

Amount

The total proposed increase in building footprint is 9m² as illustrated on the submitted plans.

Use

The existing use of the site and building are to remain unchanged.

Access

Access is solely from the west, directly from Wharf Road. The site affords sufficient vehicular and pedestrian access which is to be retained and unchanged under the proposed scheme.

Improved disabled access and amenities will be provided via a new centrally located main entrance.

Parking and cycle storage

Existing parking arrangements are to be retained and unchanged providing 3 parking spaces.

New defined cycle parking is to be installed providing a minimum of 4 secure spaces with Sheffield style cycle loops.

Refuge and waste

The current refuge and waste collection location and frequency will remain the same as currently in operation with no proposed changes.

Sustainability

The proposals include a series of photovoltaic panels to the southern roof plane. It is intended for these to provide electricity for the heating system and new electric car charging points. Surplus electricity will be battery stored.

Secure cycle parking will be provided to encourage sustainable travel for existing long-standing employees who live locally.

Impact & Justification

The building or site itself is not a heritage asset but is located adjacent to the Higham Ferrers Conservation Area.

The alterations proposed are in keeping with the existing appearance of the site and wider area. Given the location of the rear extension towards the rear of the site the new addition is considered to be of low impact.

Throughout the scheme high quality materials that match the local vernacular will be specified. Materials including traditional slates, upgraded red facing brickwork, timber cladding and aluminium doors and windows will be used.

The changes proposed are considered modest and seek to respect the existing materiality of the site and conservation area whilst enhancing the setting from the current tired state.

Conclusion

The proposals aim to redevelop the run-down site whilst retaining its use, leading to positive benefits such as retaining a town asset, which in turn will increase character and appearance of the surrounding Conservation Area.

The site is highly accessible, in a well-connected location and just short walk from the town centre and local car park.

The proposed development will not have a significant adverse impact upon the surrounding area and would lead to an increase of the vitality of the surrounding area. The development is therefore in conformity with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework, as well as Local Plan policy.

In light of the above assessment, it is considered the proposed development is fully policy compliant, and planning consent should be granted.