



# DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT (INCLUDING HERITAGE ASSESSMENT)

In respect of an application for planning permission for the erection of a garden room and installation of outdoor swimming pool at:

Lawford House, Grange Road, Lawford, CO11 2JD

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## 1.0. Introduction

- 1.1. This Design and Access Statement has been prepared in support of a planning application for the erection of a garden room and installation of an outdoor swimming pool at Lawford House, Grange Road, Lawford.
- 1.2. It is prepared in accordance with the Design Council document “Design and Access Statements: How to write, read and use them” and should be read in conjunction with the drawings prepared by Medusa Design which accompany the planning application.
- 1.3. An assessment of the heritage impacts of the proposal is also set out within the relevant section of this statement.

## 2.0 Site Context

- 2.1. Lawford House is a Grade II Listed building set in significant grounds to the southern edge of the village. The listing describes the building as:

“House. C17 rear range, C18/C19 front range. Front range of gault brick, rear range timber framed with brick facing. Hipped grey slate roofs. Front range has parapet, 7 window range of small paned vertically sliding sashes, moulded flat lintels, moulded surrounds, internal shutters. Central double panelled doors. 2 pairs of fluted columns with moulded capitals and bases on a low plinth support the flat canopy. The lower forward bases support a pair of dolphins. Rear range has lodged side purlin roof with pegged rafters and circa 1800 inserted circular open-well stair”.

- 2.2. The site is accessed from a long access road which adjoins the highway at the junction of Grange Road and Bromley Road. The access sits just within the 20mph zone.
- 2.3. To the north are existing residential properties facing Grange Road and School Lane, with open countryside to the south, east and west.

### 3.0 The Design Approach

3.1 Chapter 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's aims to achieve well-designed places.

3.2 It states (paragraph 131) that:

“131. The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this”.

3.3 The above has formed the basis of the design approach taken in respect of this proposal. The applicant, supported by Medusa Design, has given consideration to a number of material considerations in the design of these proposals with the overall aim of achieving a high standard of design that would secure and preserved the special character of this building. Indeed, the applicant believes that the work would enhance the use of the property as a single dwelling, providing garden facilities that would improve the use of the grounds in the immediate vicinity of the property.

3.4 The following sets out how each of the various design matters have been addressed.

#### Use

3.5 The proposal seeks to make efficient use of land, in line with the aims of paragraph 119 of the NPPF which identifies that “Planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions”.

3.6 The existing dwelling is set within a significant plot whereby the proposed swimming pool and garden room are consistent with the continued use of the site as a single dwelling. It is noted

that permission has been granted previously for a swimming pool in the grounds of Lawford House, but this is used commercially and not solely for the benefit of the applicant.

### Layout

- 3.7 In developing the layout of these proposals, due consideration has been given to the surroundings and the amenity of the wider area. The architect has gained a detailed understanding of the property through their surveys and visits to the property so as to fully inform the design proposal hereby presented for consideration. Indeed, they have been involved with a number of recent works to the property and thereby recognise the importance of the building as a heritage asset, and the need to recognise the setting and significance of the asset in designing any proposals that affect its form or fabric.
- 3.8 The proposed garden room building and swimming pool have been designed to respect the character and form of the dwelling, and to support its continued use. They are sited close to the house so as to enable easy access between outdoor and indoor spaces.
- 3.9 The design of the proposed works/building respect the setting of the listed building and provide ancillary and subordinate elements that do not detract from an understanding of the property or its significance. For all of these reasons, the proposed layout is considered to have been developed following a detailed appraisal of the site and its surroundings, and thereby constitutes good design.

### Amount

- 3.10 Please refer to drawing 2095/23/01 for details of the size of the garden room. The building has a footprint of 11m x 5m with a small plant room at one end. It is 4m in height overall.
- 3.11 The pool is 8.5m x 4.5m and is set flush to the ground level.

### Landscaping

- 3.12 Given the nature of the proposals, there is limited opportunity for new soft landscaping to be incorporated in the application. However, the proposal does not remove any of the landscaped areas of the property which are, in themselves, significant.

### Appearance

- 3.13 There is little that can be said regarding the appearance of the swimming pool. This is to be dug into the ground.
- 3.14 The proposed garden room is of simple form and finished in natural cladding to the walls and slate to the roof. The extract below shows how the building and pool would appear.



- 3.15 The proposal is, therefore, of an honest form and appearance that would respect the character of the dwelling and, through the use of appropriate materials, would not intrude into its setting.

### Access

- 3.14 The proposal makes no changes to the pedestrian or vehicular access to the site.

## 4.0 Heritage Impacts

- 4.1 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a duty on local planning authorities to have special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing conservation areas (Section 72).
- 4.2 Chapter 16 of the NPPF sets out the Government's position on the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment. Paragraph 200 of the NPPF requires applicants to describe the impact of proposals on the significance of any heritage asset to a level of detail proportionate to the assets' importance. This should be no more than is sufficient to understand the potential of that impact on the significance.
- 4.3 Paragraph 201 requires local planning authorities to identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this assessment into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.
- 4.4 Paragraph 203 sets out that in determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of:
- the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
  - the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
  - the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.
- 4.5 Paragraph 205 of the NPPF apports great weight to a designated asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. The NPPF highlights that significance can be harmed or lost through physical change and any harm requires clear and convincing justification.

4.6 Paragraphs 207 and 208 address how local planning authorities should deal with situations where the assessment of impacts has identified harm to a heritage asset.

4.7 At the local level, Policy PPL9 of the Tendring District Local Plan 2013-2033 and Beyond (Section 2) identifies that:

“Proposals for new development affecting a listed building or its setting will only be permitted where they will protect its special architectural or historic interest, its character, appearance and fabric. Where a proposal will cause harm to a listed building, the relevant paragraphs of the NPPF should be applied dependent on the level of harm caused. Proposals will be treated favourably where they:

- a. are explained and justified through an informed assessment and understanding of the significance of the heritage asset (including any contribution made to that significance by its setting); and
- b. are of a scale, design and use materials and finishes that respect the significance of the listed building (including any contribution made to that significance by its setting).

Within the District the Council keeps a record of listed structures and buildings that are at risk of degradation. The Council will support proposals that bring heritage assets into viable use.

4.8 These legislative and policy provisions thereby identify a need to assess the significance of the heritage asset in a proportionate manner, identify the impact of the proposed development on that significance, balance any harm arising against the public benefits and ensure that the special character of the building is preserved and, where possible, enhanced.

4.9 It is clear that the primary impacts to be taken into account here are the impact on the listed building with regard to the impact on its setting. The proposal does not seek to change the use of this land in association with the dwelling, such that it is the visual impacts that are key here.

4.10 The siting and design of the proposal has been carefully considered. The proposal seeks to make efficient use of land adjacent to the house where it would be expected to find ancillary

structures such as this. The scale and form of the garden room would read as a subservient structure set within the dedicated garden area, and behind the main facades of the house where buildings such as this would be expected to be sited. It does not intrude into views of the property on the approach to the house from either the eastern or western access points.

4.11 It is considered, therefore, that the proposal does not give rise to harm to the setting of this asset. Furthermore, the proposal seeks to deliver a pool and garden room that will contribute to the enjoyment of the property and thereby support its continued use.

4.12 For those reasons, the proposal is acceptable in terms of its heritage impacts.

## 5.0 Conclusion

5.1 The application seeks permission for works to provide a pool and garden room at Lawford House, a Grade II listed building. It is recognised that there is a need to ensure that the proposal would be delivered in a manner that constitutes good design and which would not give rise to harm to this heritage asset.

5.2 The proposed works will enhance the facilities available to Lawford house and support its continued use as a residential dwelling,. The proposed works make efficient use of this part of the site without causing harm to the character of the house or harming the living conditions of neighbours. The proposal comprises good design in the terms envisaged by the NPPF and the respective development plan policies.

5.3 The proposal has been robustly assessed in respect of the impacts on this important heritage asset. No harm is found to occur to the character or setting of this building, and the proposal thereby responds positively to the heritage of this building and its significance.

5.4 For all of these reasons, it is respectfully requested that the local planning authority grant planning permission and listed building consent in the terms requested.