

DESIGN, ACCESS & HERITAGE STATEMENT
for
WISTERIA COTTAGE
RIDGE LANE
NEWNHAM
HAMPSHIRE
RG27 9AS



Site and Surroundings

The application site is set on the outskirts of Newnham village, on a country lane leading to Rotherwick, and is set at the edge of Newnham Conservation Area. The village does not have a settlement policy boundary. To the North of the site is Ridge Lane with Newnham House beyond, set well back from the road to the west and south are further residential dwellings and to the east is a small holding, separated by mature trees and hedging.

The site is largely flat and rectangular, measuring 47.5 x 20m with an area of approximately 0.095 hectare (0.23 acres). The site is set back from the road behind a wide verge of common land and the house is set back from the front boundary by approximately 13m, with a gated access that leads to a generous parking area flanked by a large double garage. Behind the garage and linked to the house, a further outbuilding accommodates the home office/study, an arts and crafts area and storage space. A large timber clad shed is located between the garage and front boundary, which is comprised of a tall, closed timber fence that prevents views into the site.

Newnham footpath No3 runs roughly west to east, south of the surrounding neighbouring garden of Waratah. Although it may be possible to get glimpsed views of Wisteria Cottage from the right of way, particularly in winter months, the house is set over 135m away, there is mature hedging and trees along the boundary, as well as two sets of fencing and the new dwelling, Waratah, is largely set between the footpath and Wisteria Cottage. For these reasons it is not considered that the rear elevation of Wisteria Cottage faces a 'highway.'

Architectural History

Wisteria Cottage is a mid-20th Century (circa 1940) brick and clay tile dwelling. It is not of any great character or appearance and contributes little to the Conservation Area. The house itself is of inadequate quality with no insulation, very small rooms and the windows were so rotten that they have recently been replaced, as recommended in the Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) issued in 2013, Ref Appendix 1.

Attached and accessed through Wisteria Cottage is an 'L' shaped range of outbuildings, one part of which dates from circa 1914. There has been significant storm damage over the history of the building, resulting in inferior quality repairs by previous owners. The older existing roof to the rear has been rebuilt over the years, with contemporary detailing and felt underlay, while the front, newer portion remains in an extremely poor state of repair. The map accompanying the Newnham Conservation Area Appraisal (see below) identifies the outbuildings as 'notable', but not Wisteria Cottage itself.

The application site once formed a part of the Tithe Barn site, which is now split into three separate properties, with Tithe Barn set at the far western side, over 87m away from Wisteria Cottage, set on the far eastern side of the former plot, and Waratah set between them, and 33m from Wisteria Cottage.



Extract from the Newnham Conservation Appraisal Map.

Relevant Planning History

- Land between Tithe Barn and Wisteria Cottage.
Erection of 1 no. dwelling house partly on the site of a tennis court with formation of access driveway and new access on to Ridge Lane.

Initially approved under application: Ref. No: 20/01798/FUL Validated: Mon 20 Jul 2020.

Amendments to the scheme were approved under: Ref. No: 21/03830/FUL Validated: Wed 19 Jan 2022.

Proposals

The existing dwelling is small, cramped and cold. It is, however, set within a reasonably sized plot in a very desirable location. The hope is therefore to up-grade the existing, attached outbuildings, currently used as a study, craft room, gym and store, to accommodate a kitchen/dining room and wc, and to add a first floor over the existing single storey footprint so that, when combined with the existing first floor, three bedrooms are created, one with dressing area and en suite, and a family shower room. The two existing bedrooms are very small, and the shared bathroom is cramped. These changes will allow a more relaxed layout to the main house and create a more spacious interior, including a spectacular void over the kitchen. A generous landing will create a lovely study area with views out over the countryside and down into the kitchen. A good proportion of the existing garage will remain as storage for bikes and general tools, as well as provide a workshop area, accessed from the outside.

While it is noted that the outbuildings are identified as 'notable' on the Newnham Conservation Appraisal Map, the initial proposals (Ap. No: 20/01798/FUL) approved for Waratah, the 7000 sqft new house currently being erected on the neighbouring plot, included the demolition of half of the notable outbuildings, and that half being nearest to the road and most easily seen by the general public; [Access would be shared with Tithe Barn Cottage \(Now Wisteria Cottage\) and would necessitate the removal of a car port and small wooden garage and shed at the front/side of that property, leaving plenty of room for parking to serve that property.](#) The wording is a little disingenuous as the 'carport' is actually a garage with the door left open, but no schedule of works setting out how the remaining portion would be shored up or made weather tight was offered and none was requested. It can only be deduced that the notable buildings, which are in a poor state

of repair with blue tarpaulin needed to keep the garage watertight, are not considered important to the character of the Conservation Area. However, the existing walls, the only original feature that can be retained as the existing roof is in urgent need of a complete overhaul, are to be renovated and retained within the proposed works. New solar panels will be installed within the hidden flat roof area of the garage, ref. P.01, which will be hidden to sight from the adjacent road.

Once the building work is complete, the shed located at the front boundary will be demolished. It is in an extremely poor state of repair, and this will open the front aspect of the dwelling up to the road which will improve the conservation area considerably. A replacement, traditional shed, of a similar size to the existing, is proposed to the eastern boundary, set back behind the house. This shed is necessary for the storage of works equipment and materials and its location, with the sturdy side gates offering an extra degree of protection, will be the most secure.



Front view of dwelling.



Rear view of dwelling.



View of front boundary garage/shed.

Style, Massing and Appearance.

Wisteria Cottage is a chalet-style dwelling with the eaves set two thirds of the way up the first-floor windows. A large garage and further outbuilding are attached to the side of the house. The hope is to retain the existing footprint of these outbuildings and raise the ridge by 935mm to accommodate a new first floor. The resultant ridge line and eaves would still be set well under those of the existing dwelling and so retain its dominance. The roof of a small link between the two units would be set at an even lower level to emphasise the form and dominance of the existing dwelling. The roofs would be hipped to match the existing, reducing the general mass towards the boundary. A cat-slide is incorporated to the roof over the proposed kitchen which further reduces the perceived mass from the road.

The extension would also be chalet-style and emulate the style of the existing dormers, windows and eave details of the main house to tie the two together. The existing windows were so rotten that, after advice from a planning officer and the EPC, they have had to be recently replaced. Smaller windows have been incorporated to the front and side elevations of the extension adjacent to the existing house to retain the cottage feel, while larger windows are included to the private rear elevation to maximise light in and views out.

To further retain the visual dominance of the main dwelling it is proposed to clad the upper portion of the extension with oak boarding. This is both a nod to the 'outbuilding' status of the existing, and to tie in with the new, large dwelling being erected in the neighbouring plot. The original brick walls of the garage and outbuildings will be retained as a plinth wall.

The second chimney, set to the side of the main house is to be demolished to make way for the link to the new extension, but the main, dominant chimney, set within the ridge line of the house, is to be retained. A new, oak framed, pitched-roof porch is to be added over the front door and so visually increase its presence.

The existing foot print of Wisteria Cottage = 134sqm. There will be no increase to the footprint.

The Existing Gross Internal Area of the house (including garage) = 159sqm.

The Proposed Gross Internal Floor Area of the house (including storage) = 203sqm.

This represents a **27%** increase in Gross Internal Floor Area of the house, all within the same footprint.

The Existing Gross Internal Area of the house (excluding garage) = 131sqm.

The Proposed Gross Internal Floor Area of the house, (excluding storage and workshop) = 180 sqm

This represents an increase of **49 sqm**, so there is no CIL payment is due for this application.

The new materials, other than the solid oak cladding, are all to match the existing; red brick for the walls where infill is necessary, white, cottage-style windows, red clay tiles to the roofs and black coated aluminium rainwater goods, ref Appendix 1.



Front and side view of the garage and outbuilding.

Conservation Impact Statement

The existing house adds little amenity to the conservation area, being of poor quality and mean proportions. The attached garage and outbuilding do have some appeal with deep, moss-covered roofs but the front roof has fallen into disrepair with tiles missing and a collapsed hip while the rear roof has been largely replaced relatively recently. The roofs would need to be replaced even if no development goes ahead. The proposals are discrete, within the existing footprint, appropriate in both scale and materials to the original dwelling and will enhance the streetscape of the dwelling. The demolition and replacement of the dilapidated front shed to a far less-dominant location will open-up the front of the site and greatly improve its aspect. The introduction of oak cladding will make the extension appear less substantial and tie in with the very large new house

currently under construction next door. Overall, the proposals represent a substantial improvement to the Conservation area.

Trees

There are several mature and semi mature trees around the site, mainly set towards the front of the plot and at the boundary.



T1, T2 & T3



T4 & T5



T7

Relevant trees:

- T1 Sycamore**
Height 19m/ Girth 380 & 250mm dia./ Canopy 10m dia/ Early Mature/ Category C1-B2/ 5.5m RPA
- T2 Common Oak**
Height 19m/ Girth 700mm dia/ Canopy 11m dia/ Mature/ C1-B2/ 8.4m RPA
- T3 Yew**
Height 7m/ Multi stem, 150, 120, 150, 100mm dia/ semi mature/ Canopy 6m dia/ C1/ 3m RPA
- T4 Norway Maple**
Height 19m/ Girth 450mm dia./ Canopy 11m dia/ Mature/ Category C1-B2/ 5.5m RPA
- T5 Common Oak**
Height 17m/ Girth 420mm dia./ Canopy 10m dia/ Early Mature/ Category C1/ 5m RPA
- T6 Hawthorne**
Height 17m/ Girth 250mm dia./ Canopy 6m dia/ Early Mature/ Category C1/ 3m RPA
- T7 Silver Birch**
Height 18m/ Girth 360 & 350mm dia./ Canopy 10m dia/ Mature/ Category B2/ 6m RPA
- G8 Cyprus, Mapel, Red Cedar, Horse Chestnut group**
Height 15m/ Girth 200mm dia./ Semi Mature/ Category C1/ 2.4m RPA
- T9 Small Leaved Lime**
Height 24m/ Girth 760mm dia./ Canopy 14m dia/ Mature/ Category A1/ 9m RPA

(Tree Reference numbers and RPAs are included within Site Plan, P.03)

Arboricultural Implications Statement

The trees were surveyed in accordance with the current standard employed to assess the impact of any development near trees, BS 5837:2012, 'Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction'. The girth was measured at a height of 1.5 metres. The BS 5837 establishes various classifications for trees and this assessment is also noted.

The trees to the front of the site, T1-T5, are located along the parking area of the house and are therefore used to coping with vehicular manoeuvres and the resultant soil compaction. It is therefore felt unnecessary to provide temporary protective fencing around their RPAs but, although the driveway is well established and the ground compacted, in order to protect the tree roots from heavy vehicles during construction 20mm plyboard will be laid over 100mm bark on a geotextile over the existing drive/Root Protection Area as shown on the Site plan. By the nature of the site entrance access will be restricted to smaller vehicles. Vehicles and equipment entering the site will be carefully controlled and kept to a minimum, with no stopping or parking on the protected area. The proposed shed is to be located out of the RPA.

Please note that there is no ground floor extension work planned. All the development will take place within the footprint of the existing building and the trial holes, dug to reveal the extent of the existing foundations, indicate that they are adequate to add a first floor over the existing ground floor. Therefore, the RPAs that do extend to the existing building, T5, T7 and G8, will not be damaged through invasive building work.

The boundary garage/store is located beneath T7, a silver birch, and is to be used as a store while the building work is carried out. Once the project is completed this structure is to be demolished. Before this it will function as protection to T7 as no vehicles can get close to it. No temporary protective fencing can be installed around it as the fence would also prevent access to the building elevations which need to be refurbished. However, any such access will be pedestrian and so not damage the roots. All storage of materials will be to the rear of the property for added security and there will be no storage allowed under any tree.

G8 and T9 are in the neighbouring plot and their RPAs do not extend past the boundary fence (other than the one tree mentioned above).

T6 is located in the bottom half of the garden. A temporary, 2m high Herras protection fence is proposed on the line shown on P.03, 12.5m from the rear of the dwelling and is to be installed prior to building work commencing, to prevent any accidental damage of the tree or the garden. The fence will remain in place until the building work is complete and all materials are removed from the site.

There will be no storage of materials, changes to the existing ground levels, or fires, under the tree canopies and there will be no mixing of concrete within 10m of any trees. All underground services and rainwater pipes/soakaways will be located so that they do not cut across the Root Protection Areas.

Flooding

The Environment Agency has confirmed that the site is outside of the flood risk area for Rivers and Sea but that there is a low risk of surface water flooding. As there are no plans to extend the property outside of the existing footprint this will not exasperate any potential surface water flooding, nor have any effect on local storage capacity or the flow of run-off. However, in accordance with the Environment Agencies flood protection recommendations:

- The floor level of the ground floor will be set at the same level as the existing house. There is no record of the existing house flooding and therefore the proposed floor level will not increase the risk further.
- The floor construction will comprise of a new solid slab (rather than block and beam). A damp proof membrane will sit on top of the slab and will continue up the inside face of the external wall 300mm above the finished floor level. In this way the extension is effectively tanked.
- The floor finish will be none porous tiles so that in the event of a flood the floor will not be destroyed and will be easily cleaned.
- New electrical sockets will be positioned 450mm above floor level (to comply with disabled regulations) with the wiring dropping down from the ceiling rather than coming up from the floor. In this way if there is a flood the electrics will not be affected.
- The drive and general approach to the house will remain as gravel to allow water to permeate into the soil (as existing) and the site levels will not change.

Biodiversity Assessment

An Ecological Bat Survey Report was issued August 2023 which found that:

- A limited number of bats were heard and seen foraging in and around the site throughout the survey but that none were seen emerging from or re-entering the garage to roost.
- No bats or evidence of bats were observed during the PEA and no bats were seen entering or emerging from the garage during the activity survey. This indicates that the garage has not been used as a roost by bats and that an EPSL from Natural England (NE) is not required.

The full report is attached separately to the application.

Access

The existing vehicular and pedestrian access will be unaffected by the proposals.

Conclusion

We believe that the proposals for *Wisteria Cottage* are sympathetic to the character and visual quality of the area and are in keeping with the local context both in terms of design and siting. Consequently, the proposals will have a positive effect on the conservation area, contributing towards the local distinctive character and being visually attractive. The modest proposals will also enhance the quality of life for the applicants, and we therefore ask that the council approved the proposals.

Appendix 1

Energy performance certificate (EPC)

Tithe Barn Cottage
Ridge Lane
Newnham
HOOK
RG27 9AS

Energy rating **G**

This certificate expired on: **13 August 2023**

Certificate number: **8897-6928-7110-8847-7996**

Property type: **Detached house**

Total floor area: **81 square metres**

Rules on letting this property: !Warning! You may not be able to let this property.

This property has an energy rating of G. It cannot be let unless an exemption has been registered. You can read guidance for landlords on the regulations and exemptions.

Energy rating and score: This property's energy rating is G. It has the potential to be C.

See how to improve this property's energy efficiency.

Score	Energy rating	Current	Potential
92+	A		
81-91	B		
69-80	C		78
55-68	D		
39-54	E		
21-38	F		
1-20	G	11	

The graph shows this property's current and potential energy rating.

Properties get a rating from A (best) to G (worst) and a score. The better the rating and score, the lower your energy bills are likely to be.

For properties in England and Wales: average energy rating: D, average energy score: 60

Breakdown of property's energy performance:

Features get a rating from very good to very poor, based on how energy efficient they are. Ratings are not based on how well features work or their condition.

Assumed ratings are based on the property's age and type. They are used for features the assessor could not inspect.

Feature	Description	Rating
Wall	Cavity wall, as built, no insulation (assumed)	Poor
Roof	Pitched, 25 mm loft insulation	Poor
Window	Single glazed	Very poor
Main heating	Room heaters, electric	Very poor
Main heat control	Appliance thermostats	Good
Hot water	Electric immersion, standard tariff	Very poor
Lighting	Low energy lighting in 75% of fixed outlets	Very good
Floor	Suspended, no insulation (assumed)	N/A
Secondary heating	None	N/A
Primary energy use	The primary energy use for this property per year is 585 kilowatt hours per square metre (kWh/m ²).	

Changes you could make:

- Step 1: Increase loft insulation to 270 mm
Typical installation cost: £100 - £350
Typical yearly saving: £143
Potential rating after completing step 1: 14 G
- Step 2: Cavity wall insulation
Typical installation cost: £500 - £1,500
Typical yearly saving: £532
Potential rating after completing steps 1 and 2: 30 F
- Step 3: Floor insulation
Typical installation cost: £800 - £1,200
Typical yearly saving: £118
Potential rating after completing steps 1 to 3: 34 F
- Step 4: Hot water cylinder insulation (80 mm insulation jacket)
Typical installation cost: £15 - £30
Typical yearly saving: £21
Potential rating after completing steps 1 to 4: 35 F
- Step 5: Fan assisted storage heaters and dual immersion cylinder
Typical installation cost: £1,200 - £1,600
Typical yearly saving: £579
Potential rating after completing steps 1 to 5: 61 D
- Step 6: Solar water heating
Typical installation cost: £4,000 - £6,000
Typical yearly saving: £42
Potential rating after completing steps 1 to 6: 63 D

- **Step 7: Double glazed windows**
Replace single glazed windows with low-E double glazed windows
Typical installation cost: £3,300 - £6,500 (costs based on 2013 prices!)
Typical yearly saving: £105
Potential rating after completing steps 1 to 7: 68 D
- Step 8: Solar photovoltaic panels, 2.5 kWp
Typical installation cost: £9,000 - £14,000
Typical yearly saving: £268
Potential rating after completing steps 1 to 8: 78 C

Suggestions 1-6 do not require planning consent as internal measures that can be taken to improve the thermal performance of the dwelling.

Item 7 does not require planning permission as the cottage lies outside of the area covered by Article 4. The chosen windows are appropriate in style for the traditional ethos of the house and area.

Item 8 is included within the application, ref P.01 where solar panels are included on the flat roof area so will not be seen.

Appendix 2

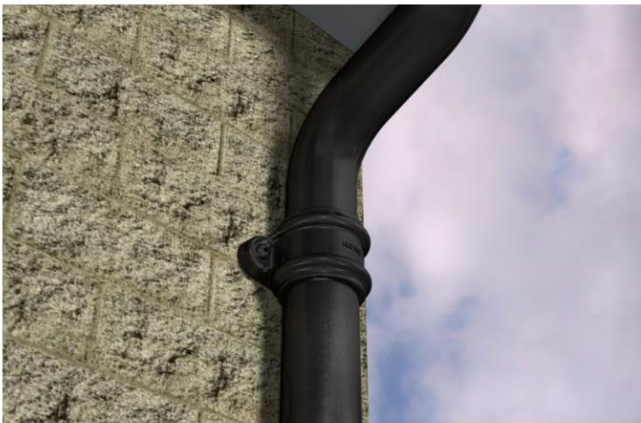
Alutec Aluminium Rainwater Systems



Traditional half-round gutter system.



Traditional half round gutter and outlet.



Traditional circular downpipes.