

**DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT
INCORPORATING HERITAGE STATEMENT AND LISTED BUILDING NOTES**

RUSH COTTAGE, NYTON ROAD

REVISED MAR 2012

1. Context

Rush Cottage is located to the north of the village of Westergate. Nyton Road sits immediately to the south. Rush cottage is a large detached dwelling within a generous site. Properties of similar density sit to its north, east and west boundaries.

2. Amount

The ground floor of the existing dwelling is rather incoherent in its layout. The sun room is too narrow to be of practical use and the kitchen is remote from the dining and other living areas. There is no corridor to the first floor meaning that access to the bedrooms and bathroom is via other bedrooms and affords no privacy. It is proposed to address these shortcomings by extension and internal adaptation.

3. Layout

The existing sun room extension will be removed and the kitchen extension part removed. A new, wider, single storey extension will replace the existing sun room and a further small single storey extension to the rear is also proposed. These extensions will comprise dining room and kitchen respectively, linked via the existing study area. The existing side extension will be extended to form a new ground floor bedroom with ensuite. An additional set of stairs and the introduction of a short corridor to the first floor mean that the first floor bedrooms will all be accessible.

4. Scale

Following the refusal of the previous scheme further discussions have been undertaken with both Planning Officer and Historic Buildings Advisor. The footprint, scale and mass of the proposals have been reduced accordingly. These discussions have also resulted in changes to the detailing and appearance of the proposals, as noted in 6. Below.

5. Landscaping

The existing southern (road) boundary comprises a flint wall, timber fencing and soft landscaping. Other than the replacement of the existing fence on a like-for-like basis no changes are proposed to this boundary. The remaining boundaries comprise fencing, much of which is in a poor state of repair. This will be replaced with a new timber fence as indicated on the site plan. With the exception of the 3 trees marked for removal on the site plan, all existing trees will be retained. It is proposed to move the garage footprint slightly to increase the width of the access. A new garden wall is proposed between the drive and garden.

6. Appearance

The proposed materials for the extensions have been carefully chosen to ensure that they are sympathetic and in-keeping to the existing cottage. The materials for the side and rear extensions are from a traditional palette of materials including handmade clay roof tiles, stained timber windows, oak framing and painted brickwork. A plinth base and stained rafter feet at the eaves add additional interest. The front extension comprises an oak framed sun room with glazed roof and glazing between the frames. This allows a degree of transparency through to the historic fabric of the main cottage walls.

7. Access

No changes are proposed to the access off the main road. The existing roadside parking area, in front of the relocated garage, will be slightly enlarged.

8. Heritage and Listed Building Notes

The building comprises the original timber framed thatched cottage dating from around 1730, with various later extensions to the south and west believed to be Victorian, say dating between 1850-1900. The front sun-room extension and side kitchen extension are both more recent. It is understood that the cottage is Grade II listed.

It is proposed to keep the original and Victorian elements intact, with just the more modern extensions being removed or improved. These are unsightly and unsympathetic to the main cottage. As described in items 4 and 6 above, great care has been taken to ensure that the new extensions are sympathetic to the existing cottage in form, mass, style and materials.

The proposed fencing changes to the east will have little or no impact on the setting of the listed building. Whilst the garage is moving slightly closer to the main cottage, to afford a greater access width, the change is only minimal and any impact on the setting of the listed building is offset by the proposed improved style and materials of the garage. Changes to the roof over the existing flat roof garage will improve its appearance. The new brick wall will provide definition between the drive and gardens and prevent children and pets from straying onto the busy road.

The remainder of this statement explores the specific internal and external works proposed:

Works to the external fabric:

- The top of the chimney to the north elevation is unstable and requires localized rebuilding and repair.
- It is proposed to remove the chimney over the existing entrance hall and first floor bathroom. This part of the building is a later addition and not part of the original timber framed element. The chimney is utilitarian in appearance both internally and externally, and is therefore of no historical significance. Its removal allows greater flexibility to the planning of the revised internal layouts.
- Retained external windows and doors, if in poor repair, will either be repaired in-situ or replaced on a like-for-like basis.
- New windows and doors within the new extensions will be stained timber and double glazed. We would be happy to provide 1:5 details/elevations post permission.
- The existing painted external walls are generally in fair condition and will be redecorated with an appropriately specified paint or limewash. The colour will remain white.

Internal works at ground floor:

- The existing toilet partition to the entrance hall will be removed. As noted above this part of the building is not part of the original timber framed element. The removal of the partition allows the introduction of the new stair up to the first floor.
- The existing ladder from the living room up to the first floor is to be removed and the first floor infilled to match the adjacent area. This ladder is a dangerous and impractical way in which to gain access to the first floor.
- The extensions necessitate the loss/reduction of 3 external windows – these will be retained and become internal features.
- The new opening into the kitchen extension is within the newer Victorian element of the cottage. The new opening will be framed in oak and has not been taken full width so as to ensure that this can be interpreted as a new opening.
- No works are proposed to the main stair or chimney/fireplaces to the 2 rooms within the original framed part of the cottage. Similarly the exposed timber framing of the old external wall within the sun-room will be untouched. Other than the stair trimming and ladder infilling all existing first floor beams and joists

will be left intact. No works are proposed to the finish of the ceilings or walls, except where they require minor localised repair (which will be carried out using traditional materials and methods).

- The existing floor levels vary across the ground floor. The living room floor has been replaced with a solid concrete floor at approximately 100 mm lower than the surrounding rooms. It is proposed to carry this flooring and level through to the other ground floor rooms. This allows the elimination of damp from the timber floored areas and the chance to add insulation, both of which will benefit the building in the longer term. Additionally, headroom - which in places is very constrained - will be improved.
- Skirtings, where present, will either be re-used or replaced on a like-for-like basis. New skirtings will match existing.
- New internal doors will match existing (painted ledged doors with simple latch) as will frames/architraves.

Internal works at first floor:

- The existing bathroom over the entrance hall will be stripped out. These fittings are all of modern origin and there are no period features. This room will be split between the new stair and a new bedroom. The provision of this stair is critical in rationalising the first floor layout. Previous schemes placing the stair outside of the main footprint of the cottage were rejected at pre-application stage as their impact was too great on the external appearance.
- A new partition and door is proposed at the top of the existing stair, to afford privacy to the occupants of this bedroom (since there is no door at the foot of the stair).
- A new partition is proposed to allow access from the new stair to the middle bedroom. Whilst this does break up the volume of this room it does not affect the principal structural members of the timber framed roof, which should allow the original integrity of the volume to still be understood.
- A small ensuite is to be formed to the corner of the middle bedroom, shared by the two adjacent bedrooms. The impact of this on the reading of the volume of this room is minimal.
- An enlarged dormer window is proposed to the east side of the middle bedroom, to allow more natural daylight into the bedroom. This dormer will match the size and style of the rear facing dormers.
- No works are proposed to the chimneys and no principal or secondary roof members will be affected. Exposed timbers within the external walls and dividing partitions will be left exposed. The floors will be left intact.
- Some tidying up and localised repair of the ceilings, skellings and walls will be required. These will be carried out using traditional materials and methods (e.g. lath and lime plaster).
- Existing skirtings to bed 2 will be retained. There are no skirtings to beds 3 and 4. New skirtings will match existing.
- New internal doors will match existing (painted ledged doors with simple latch) as will frames/architraves.

