

# NEIL HOLLAND ARCHITECTS

7 Maltravers Street · Arundel  
West Sussex · BN18 9AP  
Tel · 01903 · 882923 · Fax · 884202  
Email: office@neilhollandarchitects.co.uk  
www.neilhollandarchitects.co.uk

## Proposals for Re-Ordering at

**'Manor Farm House'**  
**Ecclesden Lane**  
**Angmering**

## A DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

### Introduction

Manor Farm House lies immediately to the west of Ecclesden Manor in Angmering, off Ecclesden Lane. Access to the Ecclesden Lane, the dwelling and, indeed, the whole of the Ecclesden Manor 'enclave' is via the new Angmering By-Pass which, ironically, has also severed the original and historical High Street direct link with Angmering village. The two barns and the stable wing which form the present house were given 'listed' status by virtue of the fact that they came under the ownership and within the curtilage of Ecclesden Manor, though the structures are believed to be relatively modern, possibly mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, and appear to be of no particular pedigree in themselves. For many years, roughly from about 1940/50 until about 1990, the barns had been left in a state of dereliction following a major fire which destroyed their roofs and, judging by the differences in the flintwork, a good deal of the external walls, as well.

Today, however, through the planning process, the barns have been rebuilt and, together with the stable wing have been converted into a single private dwelling. It is set within an acre of mature and well screened grounds, giving a feeling of quiet isolation. This change came about following the sale of the building structures on the open market and, therefore, Manor Farm House, as it has come to be known, no longer forms part of the Ecclesden Manor estate. Despite its 'listing' and proximity to Ecclesden Manor, the area does not fall within an ANOB, a Conservation Area, or any of the areas designated as Areas of Special Character.

The house was created in about 1990, following its sale, change of ownership and a number of approved planning applications in 1988 and 1989, provides for a four bedroom house, a one bedroom guest suite with associated ancillary accommodation in the stable wing, the latter established through a Certificate of Lawfulness in 2004.

During this time, the whole of the internal accommodation came into being where none had existed before, as well as a number of new features within, or appended to, the external envelope of the old structures, such as door and window openings and chimneys. It seems likely that the barns had been completely separate structures originally and that the link that currently exists was added when the buildings "coalesced" in about 1990 to form the house, and the replacement of the link, therefore, would seem to be of no great concern.

It is the result of this process that gives rise to the building we see today and, as mentioned below under Policy GEN22, has established, we believe, through precedent, the principle that this house may legitimately be the subject of suitable and appropriate planning applications.

### **Policy Background**

We believe the following policies relate to this proposal and a brief description of demands for meeting each policy requirement follows:

#### **POLICY GEN1 – Sustainability**

The proposed accommodation will improve the quality of life for the residents by virtue of the increased specification of the proposed accommodation within the existing envelope, having a better balance of simpler, more accessible spaces all centred around a new, more convenient main entrance and vertical circulation space. The new plan affords greater flexibility and increased usability demanded by the owners to suit their long term family needs.

#### **POLICY GEN2 - Built-up Area Boundary**

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#### **POLICY GEN 3 – Protection of the Countryside**

The proposal lies outside the built-up area boundary, however, it is assumed that, by virtue of the fact that these proposals involve relatively minor external works to an already existing structure which has also already been the subject of a number of approved planning applications in the recent past, these policies are not relevant here. The proposals do not involve any new 'stand-alone' buildings in the landscape and there is no extra demand placed on local infrastructure or services as a result of these proposals. The proposed development does not take away the 'rural element' of the surroundings.

#### **POLICY GEN22 – Buildings or Structures of Character**

The house is not specifically listed by Arun District Council in this sense but, clearly, as a former part of the Ecclesden Manor complex and, as today, such buildings are considered to be very attractive because of their rustic charms and their association with a rural idyll, groups of buildings such as these have become much sought after as 'buildings or structures of interest'. In this respect, they have "character". But, again, due to the fact that these buildings have already been subject to approved planning applications in the recent past, it would seem that the principle of altering, changing, modifying or re-modelling of these buildings has already been established.

#### **POLICY DEV19 - Extensions to Existing Residential Buildings**

It is believed the enlarged link/entrance between the two barns relates sympathetically to, and is visually integrated with, the existing dwelling in siting, design, form, scale and materials. To do the important job that it needs to do (described elsewhere in this statement), it is, necessarily, larger than the existing link that it replaces. Nevertheless, it has been designed to defer to the barns either side of it by means of its being set back from the main facades of the barns, its lower ridge height and the fact that it is clearly of lightweight construction in contrast to the heavy flint and brick of the barns. The barns will still stand in splendid solidity with no loss of identity or question of ambiguity.

By virtue of its isolated setting and sitting within a mature 1 acre garden with established boundaries, the proposals will have no adverse affect in terms of overshadowing, overlooking or overbearing on any of the neighbouring properties.

### **Design Principles**

As has already been clearly established, the proposals seek to re-order an existing house, which means, essentially, to modify and simplify the internal layout and accommodation in a way that is more suited to the requirements of the owners. In this respect, it is the need for, and arrangement of, the internal spaces, set within an existing envelope, which has driven the 'design'. Such external modifications as there are, have come about in order to serve the needs of the internal spaces which they serve.

The current dwelling, though large, uses the available space inefficiently, to its detriment. Thus, it only has four bedrooms and the guest suite is awkwardly situated in the main body of the house, while the stable wing is underused.

### **Use**

The proposals put forward in this application provide five bedrooms, all with en-suite facilities, in the main body of the house and a two bedroom guest suite and dedicated health suite in the stable wing. The whole design idea is based around moving the 'centre of gravity' of the house to a more convenient and central position, and this has been achieved by enlarging the 'link' to become a new double height entrance/circulation space between the two barns. This gives a much better balance to the overall internal layout of the house and its upgraded accommodation, improves access, especially to the first floor, and provides for a much more convenient, centrally placed and obvious main entrance to the house, making a much more cohesive whole. It also provides a link between the front garden and the more private courtyard garden.

The internal spaces are now larger and more simply and regularly laid out which seems more appropriate within the external envelope of a barn. This works particularly well on the ground floor where one large, open space flows into the next, accentuating the barn-like feel.

The 'stable wing' accommodation works well now, with a self-contained guest suite separated from the main body of the house for privacy, yet linked by way of a connecting door to the dedicated health suite and overlooking the lovely courtyard garden which is enjoyed by the whole house.

### **Amount**

Calculations show that the footprint of the house as it presently exists is 431.37 sq.m., compared with a figure of 446.24 sq.m. for the new proposal. This represents an increase of 3.45% and, volumetrically, a similarly insignificant figure of 3.11% has been calculated. This increase is due to the increased size of the link and the addition of an enclosed porch to protect the 'back' door at the eastern end of the house, opposite the garage block.

### **Layout**

Generally, our proposals seek to improve and upgrade the internal accommodation by means of better definition and articulation of spaces, better access and circulation, and by providing 'more' through better efficiency. The extent of work is ultimately defined and limited by the existing external envelope. With the exception of the enlarged link and the enclosed porch at the eastern end of the larger barn, the footprint and physical bulk of the buildings, and their setting within the site, remain unaltered.

### **Scale**

As mentioned above, the changes to the external building forms are relatively minor. In terms of their physical bulk and 'presence', the three existing major structural elements that define the house – the two barns and the stable wing – remain unchanged. They will sit on the site and within the landscape in exactly the same way they have done for years.

The two barns will continue to command and dominate, particularly from the entrance front where the enlarged, yet subservient link, now acting as a positive and 'working' element of the scheme, should not detract from, but enhance their status.

It is believed that the overall proportion, scale and dimensions of the new proposals provides for a little altered and visually appealing whole which will have no impact on the house in the landscape, its setting, or on neighbouring properties.

### **Landscaping**

Boundaries are being maintained as existing. The proposal includes a new ramped and stepped pathway from the driveway to the new front entrance. Combined with this is a new path around to the existing gate that accesses a secluded, but at present, almost unused enclosed garden between the house on its east, Ecclesden Lane on its west and the garage of the adjoining property to the south. This area will now form a very pleasant small and quiet garden with dedicated access from the main body of the house by way of new doors and steps. It also serves as secondary access, via a new door, to the guest suite.

The existing driveway will be partially re-aligned through the use of new low masonry walls and kerbs which, together with the removal of the old concrete steps to the old front entrance door, will allow for a large area of front garden to be re-landscaped. Through a break in the existing wall, a new car parking area will be formed, in either tarmac or gravel, with space for five cars. The courtyard garden is not altered.

### **Appearance**

All new materials are to be carefully selected, where required, to match the existing. All new openings in external walls are to be dressed with brick quoins, cills and heads to match existing. The tiled roofs of the new link and the new porch are to be finished in plain tiles to match the barn roofs.

All new external windows and doors are to be constructed in timber to match the existing dwelling with matching detailing.

### **Access**

As mentioned in the Introduction, Manor Farm House is accessed from Ecclesden Lane, which is itself accessed from the Angmering Bypass (A280). The site undulates, generally rising from Ecclesden Lane. The proposed new access to the front entrance is ramped and stepped and is designed to satisfy the requirements laid down in the Building Regulations to meet the requirements of the ambulant disabled. The new enclosed porch at the eastern end of the house occurs at a point where the natural ground level is closest to the ground floor level of the house, and as such, is the perfect place to provide wheelchair access. Access to the courtyard garden is possible for all, but is controlled by gates for security reasons.

### **Conclusion**

We believe that the proposed alterations enhance the building and improve the internal character of the house by providing much needed additional accommodation with much improved circulation and access. The house will gain a vastly improved balance and sense of cohesion through its more logical layout, emanating from the adoption of the newly positioned and configured entrance/link. The design strategy has been to achieve maximum gain from minimum impact.

We don't believe that the character of the building or its setting are adversely affected by the proposals and, that on balance, the gains far outweigh the losses. We believe the proposals will add to the quality of the property and, by virtue of its greater flexibility and accessibility, provide long term appeal and satisfaction to its occupants.

We trust that in the light of the above Design and Access statement the planning authority will feel confident in recommending the proposals for approval.

Neil Holland, RIBA ACA  
19<sup>th</sup> November 2007