

Application for Listed Building Consent

Design and Heritage Statement

1. Introduction

This Design and Heritage Statement has been prepared in support of an application for Listed Building Consent at South View, School Lane, Offley, Hertfordshire SG5 3AZ.

South View forms part of a Grade II listed building recorded under List Entry Number 1103180 and listed on 24 October 1988.

The proposals comprise:

- Removal of an existing modern internal stud partition wall between the kitchen (Room 3) and dining room (Room 2);
- Raising the floor level (circa 6 inches) within the dining room to align with the adjoining hallway and kitchen floor levels. This will involve reinstatement of the existing parquet flooring within the dining room; and
- Infilling of the existing doorway between the hallway (Landing 1) and kitchen.

Please refer to the attached pack of drawings for room identification on the floorplans.

The works are entirely internal, and no external alterations are proposed.

2. Site and Heritage Asset

South View is a Grade II listed dwelling situated on the western side of School Lane within Great Offley.

The statutory listing describes the property as a seventeenth-century timber-framed building, formerly a workhouse and divided into two dwellings known as South View and West View in the 1970s.

The listing identifies the principal significance of the building as deriving from its historic timber frame and surviving structural features including axial beams, jowled posts and braces.

The application relates solely to the South View dwelling.

The historic timber frame and structural elements identified within the statutory list description are unaffected by the proposals.

3. Existing Situation

The ground floor currently comprises a hallway (Landing 1), dining room (Room 2) and kitchen (Room 3).

The dining room is separated from the hallway by a stud partition wall understood to have been introduced during post-fire alterations undertaken during the 1970s when the building was reconfigured and subdivided into two separate dwellings.

The dining room floor currently sits approximately 150mm (6 inches) below the floor levels of the adjoining hallway and kitchen, resulting in a step down from the hallway and a step back up into the kitchen.

The room contains parquet flooring which contributes positively to the character of the interior.

The kitchen is currently accessed both directly from the hallway and via the dining room.

4. Proposed Development

The proposed works seek to improve the functionality and flow of the accommodation whilst preserving the significance of the listed building.

The proposals comprise:

- **Removal of Internal Partition**

- Removal of the existing non-structural stud partition wall between the kitchen and dining room.
- The wall is understood to be a modern intervention associated with post-fire alterations undertaken during the 1970s and is not considered to form part of the historic timber-framed structure identified within the statutory list description.

- **Floor Level Alterations**

- The existing dining room floor will be raised by approximately 150mm (6 inches) to align with the adjoining hallway and kitchen floor levels.
- The proposal will remove the existing stepped arrangement between the existing three rooms (to be altered to two rooms), creating a continuous floor level that improves accessibility, circulation and the day-to-day functionality of the dwelling.
- The works have been deliberately designed to minimise intervention to the historic fabric of the listed building.
- Rather than altering or removing the existing floor structure, the raised floor will be formed using a lightweight timber-framed construction installed above the existing floor.
- The timber framework will be carefully designed and constructed around any existing structural beams or other historic features, ensuring these elements remain undisturbed and accessible where appropriate.
- The proposed construction methodology is intended to be largely reversible, allowing the raised floor to be removed in the future without significant harm to the underlying historic fabric.
- Consideration will be given to the continued ventilation of the existing floor structure.
- The existing parquet flooring will be carefully lifted prior to construction, with individual blocks retained, protected and stored where necessary during the works.
- Following completion of the new floor structure, the original parquet flooring will be re-laid as the finished floor surface wherever practicable, thereby preserving the historic character and appearance of the room. Should any replacement blocks be required, they will be carefully matched to the existing in terms of wood type, dimensions, laying pattern and finish.

- **Infilling of Existing Doorway**

- The existing doorway between the hallway and kitchen will be infilled as part of the proposed internal reconfiguration.
- It is believed that this doorway is not an original feature of the listed building and was introduced as part of alterations undertaken during the 1970s, contemporaneous with the construction of the existing stud partition wall.
- The proposal will remove this later intervention, creating a more coherent internal arrangement whilst better reflecting the historic plan form of the building.
- The opening will be infilled using sympathetic materials and construction techniques to match the existing wall as closely as practicable, with finishes carefully blended into the surrounding fabric.
- Following completion of the works, access to the kitchen will be provided via the existing opening from the dining room, creating a more logical relationship between the kitchen and dining spaces whilst improving the day-to-day functionality of the dwelling.
- It is considered that the removal of this later alteration will preserve, and potentially enhance, the significance of the listed building by reducing the impact of twentieth-century interventions within the historic interior.

5. Design Principles

The proposals have been developed to respect the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building.

The design approach has been guided by the following principles:

- Retention of significant historic fabric;
- Removal of later twentieth-century alterations which do not contribute to significance;
- Preservation of the historic timber frame and structural elements;
- Retention and reinstatement of existing parquet flooring;
- Improvement of the functionality and accessibility of the accommodation; and
- Delivery of works that are sympathetic to the character of the listed building.

The proposals are limited in scope and entirely internal in nature. No changes are proposed to the external appearance of the building.

6. Heritage Impact Assessment

The wall proposed for removal is understood to have been introduced during post-fire rebuilding and subdivision works undertaken during the 1970s. The wall does not form part of the original historic plan form and is not the historic close-studded partition referred to within the statutory list description. The works do not affect the significant timber frame, structural members or other historic fabric identified as contributing to the significance of the listed building.

The raising of the floor level is intended to create a more coherent and practical arrangement between the hallway, dining room and kitchen. The existing parquet flooring will be retained and reinstated following completion of the works.

The infilling of the kitchen doorway represents a modest internal alteration that supports the creation of a more logical kitchen and dining arrangement.

Overall, the proposals are considered to preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the Grade II listed building and may provide a modest enhancement through the removal of later twentieth-century alterations.

8. Items to be Removed and Replacement Works

The application is accompanied by existing and proposed floor plans together with photographs, as provided in the drawings pack.

The items proposed for removal comprise:

- Existing stud partition wall between the kitchen and dining room;
- Existing doorway opening between the hallway and kitchen; and
- Existing parquet flooring within the dining room, which will be temporarily lifted as part of the floor level works.

Drawing references provided in the appended pack of drawings:

- *2026.06.27SouthViewGroundFloorExisting*
- *2026.06.27SouthViewGroundFloorExistingAnnotated*
- *2026.06.27SouthViewGroundFloorProposed*

An accompanying photo schedule is appended with the pack of drawings.

9. Conclusion

The proposed works comprise the removal of a modern internal stud partition, raising of the dining room floor level, reinstatement of the existing parquet flooring and infilling of a modern internal doorway.

The proposals have been designed to preserve the significance of the Grade II listed building whilst improving the functionality, accessibility and coherence of the accommodation. The works do not affect the historic timber frame or other significant heritage features identified within the statutory list description.

The proposals are therefore considered to preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building and Listed Building Consent is respectfully sought.