

## **DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT**

### **THE BULL, GOSMORE, SG4 7QG**

- **Rear Extension at ground floor level**
  - **Extension at first floor level**
- **Internal and External refurbishment and alterations**
  - **Window replacement and refurbishment**



**APPLICATION FOR PLANNING AND LISTED BUILDING CONSENT**  
**JOB NO: 4425** **MAY 2026**

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## 1.0 Introduction

This Design and Access Statement accompanies our submission for full planning permission and listed building consent for proposed works to this Grade II Listed dwelling. The proposed works include raising the height of the single-storey accommodation adjacent to Waterdell Lane and raising the roof over the existing bedroom area, removing the non-original pitched roof over the existing family room area, a small extension to the rear to accommodate a new entrance hallway and internal alterations and refurbishment.

This statement should be read in conjunction with the submitted drawings.

A separate Heritage Impact Statement has been prepared by the Ward Booth Partnership and accompanies this application.

## 2.0 Relevant Recent Planning History

The Bull, Gosmore:

- 86/01676/1 (prior to Listing on 28 May 1987 – List Entry Name: The Bull Public House) - Granted Conditional Planning Permission dated 22 December 1986.

Erection of single storey rear extension and dormer window.

- 92/00386/LB & 92/00387/1 – Granted Conditional Planning Permission/Listed Building Consent dated 25 June 1992.

Internal and external alterations to provide ground and first floor extensions and pergola.

- 24/00725/LBC & 24/00796/FP – Granted Conditional Planning Permission/Listed Building Consent dated 09 September 2024.

Internal and external alterations to facilitate change of use of the Public House (Sui Generis) to residential (Class C3) comprising 1x four-bed dwelling and associated landscaping, Erection of carport/ storage.

Other recent applications were made relating to signage and illumination during the building's use as a Public House.

Rosedale, Maydencroft Lane, Gosmore, SG4 7QB:

- 15/02850/1LB – Granted Conditional Listed Building Consent dated 29 January 2016.

Replacement timber double glazed windows to all elevations.

Thistley Farm, Thistley Lane, Gosmore, SG4 7QT:

- 09/02240/1LB – Granted Conditional Listed Building Consent dated 31 March 2010.

Two storey rendered rear extension amongst other works, including further external alterations.

## 3.0 General Property and Site Description

The Bull, Gosmore is a Grade II Listed single dwelling house within the Gosmore Conservation Area of North Hertfordshire District Council which is centred on two principal routes: High Street/ Hitchin Road, which runs roughly north to south through the CA, and Maydencroft Lane which runs west towards Charlton from its junction with Waterdell Lane and Preston Road at the south end of High Street.



View looking North towards High Street (left – 1-5 Maydencroft Lane, right - The Bull)

The details of the listing as it appears under Historic England's List Entry Number 1175112 is as follows:

(Quote)

*“ST IPPOLLITTS HIGH STREET TL 1827 (East side) Gosmore 8/34 The Bull P.H. - GVII*

*House, now a public house. C17 or earlier, brick cased in early C18. Timber frame cased in plum brick with red dressings now painted on front and S part. Steep old red tile roofs. Low-pitched slate roof to E part of rear wing. A 2-storeys corner building facing W with single-storey rear service wing at SE. A 3-cells plan formerly roofed with cross-gable to parlour at S end, and a large projecting external chimney on E. Very large N gable chimney as open fireplace the full width of the house. Stair turret to rear of central part with front and rear doors. W front has plat-band, black painted plinth. 4 windows to 1st floor and 2 blocked openings. Segmental arches to the 3 windows on ground floor. Flush 2-lights casement windows with small- panes and external louvred shutters on ground floor. 8- panel door (renewed) in heavy frame up 2 steps. Wrought iron sign to RH end of front.”*

It should be noted that the stair turret was no longer present on the site, the blocked openings at first floor level have been opened up and windows installed and that the external louvred shutters on ground floor windows were not present at the time that applications 24/00725/LBC & 24/00796/FP were made in 2024.

The significance of the listed building lies in the remaining eighteenth-century character and in its value as part of the street façade of the terrace group of High Street and on the junction with Maydencroft Lane.

It forms part of the cluster of dwellings at the entrance to the village of Gosmore at this crossroads and this entrance to the village is listed as Key View 5 in the CA Character Statement while the elevation of the Bull Public House to the High Street also features in Key View 2 of the same.



Key View 2 (CA character statement)



Key View 5 (CA character statement)

Other Grade II Listed Buildings in the immediate locale include 1 Maydencroft Lane to the west; Holly Tree Cottage to the north-west; and The Old Cottage and Nos. 2, 3 and 4 High Street to the north.

1, 3, 4 & 5 Maydencroft Lane form a terrace of 2-storey cottages to the west of the crossroads while The Bull – to the east of the crossroads - comprises a 2-storey element with a somewhat mediocre single-storey wing adjacent to Waterdell Lane. A row of buildings previously lined the SE corner of the crossroads, opposite The Bull.

The site itself is level with, and accessible from, the High Street. The adjacent Waterdell Lane falls away from High Street by approximately 1 metre to the eastern end of the site occupied by The Bull leaving the single storey accommodation relating somewhat awkwardly to the lane. The rear patio garden is enclosed by boundary fencing to 4 High Street and 114 Waterdell Lane and is accessed from Waterdell Lane.

## 4.0 Description of the Existing Listed Building

Listed in May 1987, the Site dates from the 17<sup>th</sup> Century or earlier with a structure of a timber frame cased in plum brick with red dressings – now painted white on West and South elevations. The earlier building has a 3-cells plan and is noted for its steep old red tile roofs (formerly roofed with a cross-gable to the parlour at the southern end which forms the earliest 'cell' and dates from the 17<sup>th</sup> Century), large projecting external chimney to the east and large gable chimney to the north.

External detailing is also a feature of the building main building along High Street, including segmental arches to the three windows at the ground floor; casement windows with small-panes at the ground floor; a plat-band between the ground and first floors; and a black painted plinth at the front/west elevation.

The main building has been extended to its rear over the years on an *ad hoc* basis to meet the requirements of the building in its former role as a Public House. The listing indicates that a turret stair once formed part of the fabric to the rear of the central part of the building though no evidence of this remains, as previously noted.



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*Aerial photograph of The Bull (outlined in red) showing varied roofscape at rear. (Note: large white area of roof is a temporary canopy)*

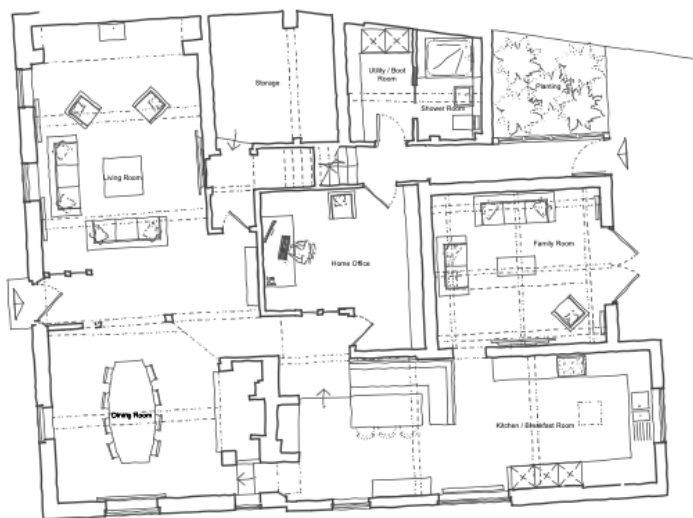
The single-storey extension along Waterdell Lane is also painted white brick but differs from the main building with a low-pitched slate roof.

*[Please note that all descriptions of the accommodation in the 'Existing' building refer to the recently consented scheme (24/00725/LBC & 24/00796/FP).]*

The property comprises a 4-bedroom dwelling (recently consented and implemented) with its entrance from the patio to the rear. The narrow hallway leads through the existing Home Office (which has neither natural light nor ventilation) to the rest of the accommodation on the Ground Floor comprising the principal rooms along the High Street and Kitchen/Breakfast Room adjacent to Waterdell Lane. The Family Room which is accessed off the Kitchen also allows access to the patio garden, though access to the garden from the rest of the property remains convoluted.

#### Ground Floor:

The ground floor accommodation along High Street (previously occupied by the main bar to the Public House) retains much of the original timber framing structure (condition to be assessed) and lath and plaster ceilings which appear to be in reasonably good condition. The rear extensions are believed to be of traditional masonry construction with internal blockwork walls and plasterboard partitions and ceilings.



*Existing Ground Floor layout showing central position of Home Office*

#### First Floor:

Access to the first-floor accommodation (comprising 4 bedrooms) is via the existing stair which also provides access to the family bathroom from the half-landing. The 3 double bedrooms occupy the spaces along High Street and the fourth, single bedroom occupies the space over the existing Home Office and has restricted headroom and limited useability.

The accommodation at first-floor level along High Street retains much of the original timber framing structure (again, condition to be assessed) with brick infill (and a low timber doorway) within the timber frame between the central and southernmost 'cells'. While the bedroom at the southern end enjoys a 'vaulted' ceiling with the purlins and main roof timbers exposed the other 2 bedrooms have ceilings of gypsum board (central bedroom) and lath-and-plaster (age unknown, existing bedroom 3) which conceal the original roof timbers. The

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rear extension is a new addition of modern construction: concrete blockwork and gypsum-based board with headroom of 2.0m at its highest point, below the ridge.

Roof finishes are natural slate and clay plain tile as previously noted. Rooflights (non-Conservation type) are installed in the plain tile roof on the original building (over the existing bathroom and landing), in the plain tile roof over the fourth bedroom (at first-floor level), and in the slate roof over the existing Family Room.

## 5.0 Proposals

The current owners have occupied the house since earlier in 2026 and would like to make changes to build a small extension at the rear of the property to improve its entrance, add first floor accommodation adjacent to Waterdell Lane, make minor changes to the building's internal arrangement to improve use of the existing spaces and upgrade the fabric of the building in ways that are sensitive to its listed status to improve its thermal performance.

An application for Pre-app advice was submitted to North Herts in September 2025, regarding proposals for The Bull, Gosmore. After an initial telephone conversation between Mark Simmons, the Conservation Officer, and the architect, a meeting was held at the property with Mark Simmons on 7<sup>th</sup> January 2026 at which developed drawings were tabled in response to the earlier conversation. Written advice was issued on 9<sup>th</sup> February 2026, ref 25/02346/PREH.



*Proposed ground floor plan – pre-App*

In summary, the advice was as follows:

1. There is an opportunity for the proposals at the rear to improve and better reveal the listed building's significance.
2. The proposed enlargements to the rear would not be substantially harmful to local vernacular. A degree of enhancement can be achieved by the erection of the rear extension with the use of high-quality materials. Removal of the pitched roof of the extension (erected in the 1990s) would also open up views to the Listed Building from its surroundings.

3. Raising the ridge to the Waterdell Lane elevation is considered to be acceptable and given the set-down from the main ridge of the building, would achieve a suitable level of subservience, to mitigate any bulky appearance created by the raised ridge. This has been enhanced by stepping the extension down to follow the drop in Waterdell Lane.
4. No objection was raised to the proposed works to the existing roofs, subject to the use of high quality, and/ or matching materials being used.
5. It was considered that the quantum of development is close to the limit of what would be acceptable though it was not considered to overlook the neighbouring curtilages. Due to the existing bulk of the "as existing" building, relative to its neighbour at no.4 High Street, although some light loss is likely to occur, the impact upon direct light levels during the day was not considered to be significant or objectionable.
6. Changes to fenestration, reusing the existing openings, by introducing new double-glazed windows with a consistent glazing bar strategy, and by introducing powder coated aluminium doors were not objected to.
7. Replacing rainwater goods, whereby plastic would be replaced by cast-iron effect aluminium goods is considered to be acceptable and would provide some degree of enhancement.
8. In design terms, the proposed internal alterations are considered to be acceptable and would not harm the public realm or the appearance of the building. There is no reason to object on this ground.
9. Although the proposed works would significantly alter the character of this Listed Building, impacting upon its significance internally, and to its contributions to the surrounding area, the Conservation Officer has not objected, citing a preferred option of the plans tabled at the January meeting. This version of the plans has been developed for this application.
10. The proposals should include some works that have been carried out, for regularisation.



*Proposed first floor plan – pre-App*

The proposals are as follows:

Throughout:

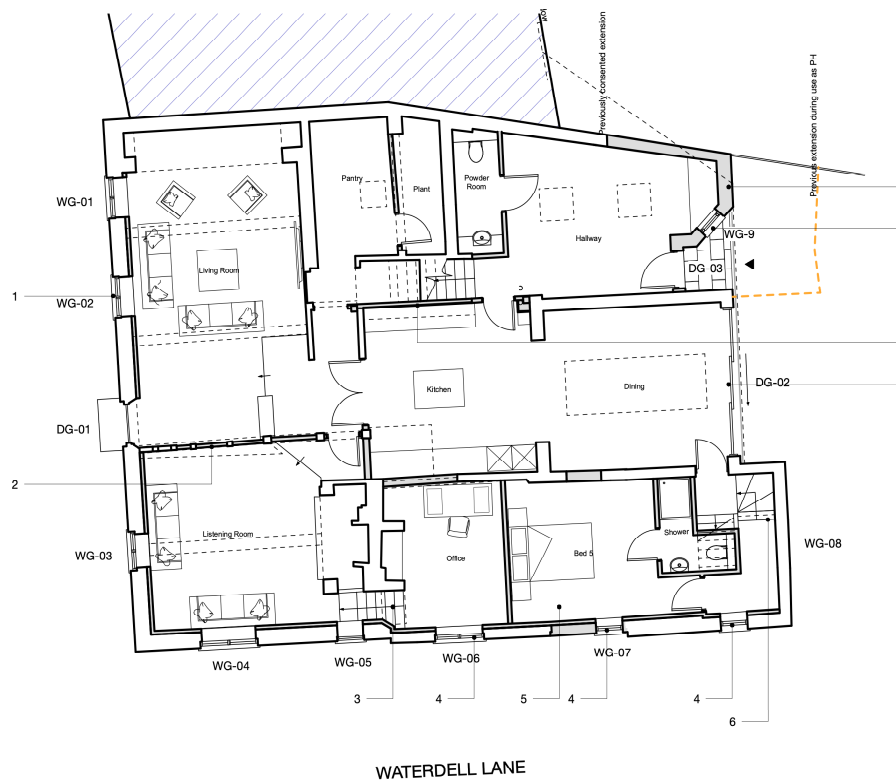
- Replacement and new windows: softwood, painted with double-glazed small panes, throughout (slim-line ovolo glazing bars to match existing). Segmental arches over new

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windows at Ground floor level (Waterdell Lane elevation) and First Floor level on rear elevation. Top-hung casement windows (on ground floor) to be replaced with side-hung casement windows throughout as shown on the drawings accompanying this application.

- Note that original frames found on W1-01 and W1-03 are to be retained with replacement casements only.
- External sills are missing on some of the existing windows. Sills (to match existing sill profile) to be included on new windows and added to existing frames, as required.
- Existing plastic rainwater goods to be replaced with cast-iron look aluminium rainwater goods, Heritage Black finish.

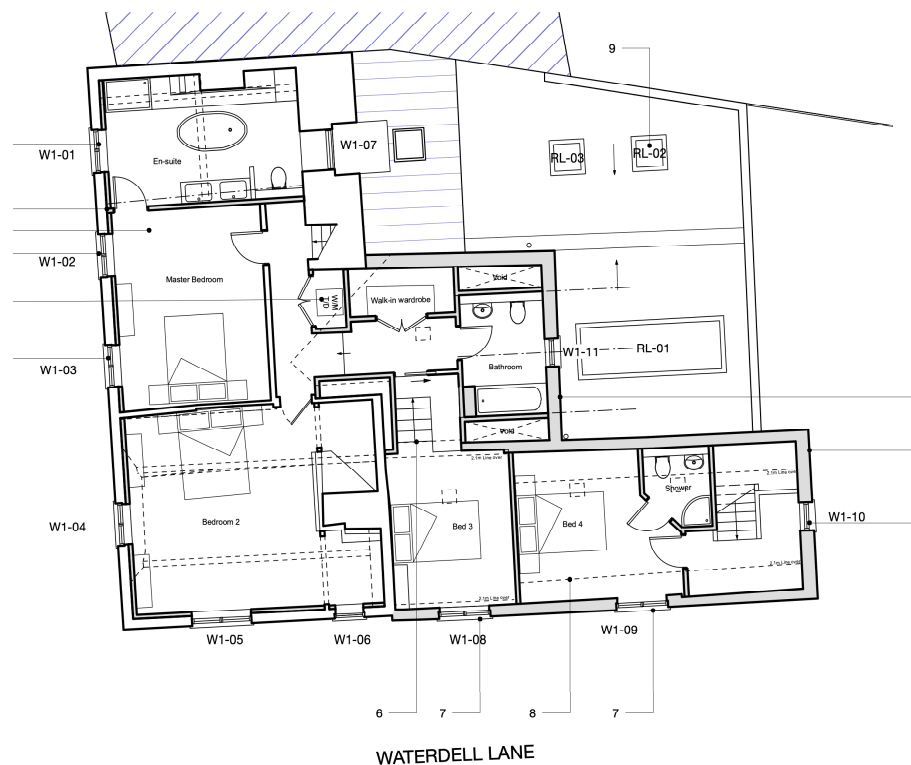


*Proposed ground floor plan – current*

#### Main building, High Street:

- No external changes are proposed on the High Street elevation (other than changes to fenestration described above).
- Minor internal alterations are proposed at Ground Floor level to remove the bar (non-original) which obstructs the plan.
- Repairs to timber frame, as required. New studwork partitions in original building to leave timber frame exposed as discussed with Conservation Officer on site.
- New doorsets (internal) as required: Crittal-style glazed, double doors proposed between Kitchen and Living Room. 4-panel timber doors proposed at First Floor level.
- Existing store to be subdivided to create new pantry and plant room (both accessed from the proposed kitchen).
- External walls to be lined internally with insulation, variable permeability vapour control layer and plasterboard (refer to detail drawing accompanying this application).
- Existing, original partition between proposed Master Bedroom and En-Suite Bathroom had been subject to heavy repairs and alterations previously. To be replaced with new, realigned plasterboard partition.

- The proposed En-suite Bathroom would re-use the existing SVP installed for the existing Bathroom.
- Existing timber joists will be strengthened where required following advice from structural engineer.
- Lime plaster from the existing ceiling over the proposed En-Suite bathroom collapsed due to water ingress from a defective lead flashing around the chimney on the northern gable. Extensive rot was found on the exposed laths. The ceiling has been removed to the existing Bedroom 3/ proposed En-Suite Bathroom to have a vaulted ceiling to match proposed Bedroom 2.
- 1no. existing rooflight on the rear face of the existing plain tile roof over the original building will be relocated to suit the proposals.
- Modern, plasterboard boxing has been removed from the existing chimneybreast in the proposed En-Suite Bathroom and lime plaster repairs carried out as required.



*Proposed first floor plan – current*

#### Waterdell Lane Accommodation:

- Lowering the floor level of the accommodation adjacent to Waterdell Lane by a maximum of 1.1m to improve that part of the building's relationship with the street and to bring it in line with the other properties in the centre of Gosmore.
- Adding accommodation at First Floor would help balance the cluster of buildings on either side of High Street, looking north from Preston Road to High Street (key View 5, Conservation Area).
- Lowered ground floor would comprise a new guest bedroom and shower-room accessed via a stair from the proposed Dining Room. A new Home Office would also be reached via proposed Listening Room. New plasterboard partitions throughout.
- A new, timber joisted first floor level would be introduced, comprising 2no. bedrooms and a shower room accessed via the main landing adjacent to the proposed Family

Bathroom and a stair from the proposed Dining Room (in the existing rear, centre extension). New plasterboard partitions throughout.

- The new roof to the new first floor extension adjacent to Waterdell Lane will be of a similar pitch as the main roof of the existing building and will be finished in slate, to match the existing roof finish of that extension. There will be 3no. Conservation rooflights on the north face of this roof, serving both bedrooms and the new shower room. The roof ridge will step down halfway along its length to reduce its mass, in accordance with Pre-App advice.
- Great care has been taken to keep the roof of the Waterdell Lane as low as possible (to remain subservient to the original building) whilst avoiding unsightly roof junctions at the rear of the building which would detract from the overall composition.
- Fire egress from Waterdell Lane would lead into the garden via window in gable at First Floor level. (The originally proposed Waterdell Lane exit has been removed in response to Pre-App advice.)



*Existing street-scene showing existing Waterdell Lane elevation with accommodation at raised Ground Floor level and offering a poor counterpoint to the cottages on Maydencroft Lane*



*Proposed street-scene showing new Waterdell Lane extension with accommodation relating to Waterdell Lane at street level and accommodation at First Floor level mirroring that in the cottages along Maydencroft Lane, as initially proposed at site meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> January 2026*



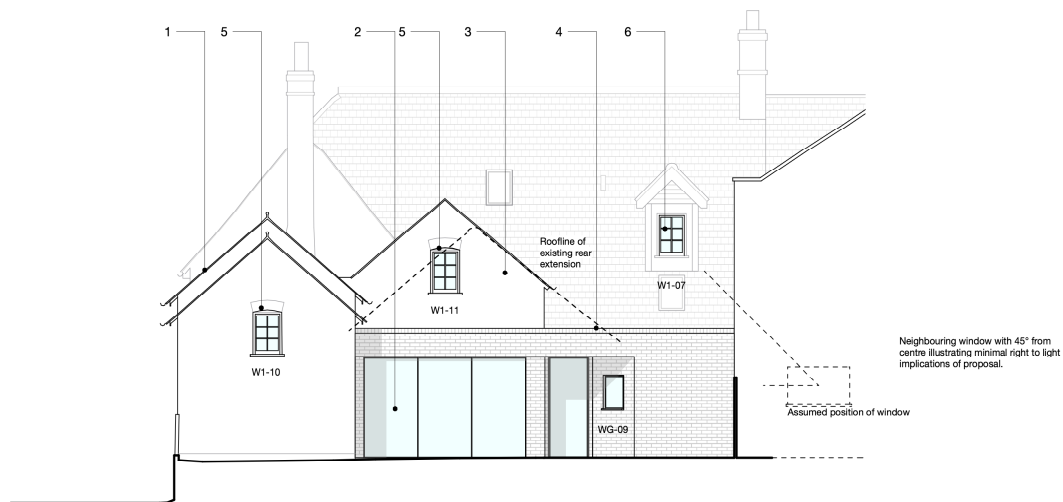
*Proposed street-scene showing new Waterdell Lane extension with accommodation relating to Waterdell Lane at street level and stepped accommodation at First Floor level, following pre-App advice*

Existing Extension - rear, centre:

- Removal of existing concrete slab to install a new, insulated concrete slab to improve thermal performance and accessibility of the building.
- Removal of existing slate pitched roof over modern extension to allow greater visibility of the original part of the listed building from Waterdell Lane.
- Creation of new openings in existing blockwork walls and plasterboard partitions in rear extensions to create better connections between entrance and living accommodation and more daylight into the heart of the building.
- New double-glazed, sliding doors to proposed Dining Room – not visible from the public realm, with slimline, powder-coated aluminium (anthracite grey) frame.
- Existing stair retained to serve Bedrooms 1, 2 & 3 and proposed Family Bathroom.
- Reconfiguration of cupboard at top of stair (formed by plasterboard partition) to create space for washing machine and tumble dryer.
- Current internal headroom in existing Bedroom 4 is around 2.0m in the centre of the room (ceiling is pitched to ridge) and so it is proposed that the ridge of the new roof in this area will be approximately 600mm higher than the ridge of the existing roof to make the space useable, which was agreed at the meeting on site with the Conservation Officer.
- The existing extension is constructed from unpainted Fletton brick and it is proposed the new accommodation will be rebuilt in lightweight timber-framed construction with a painted render finish – also agreed with the Conservation Officer at the meeting at the property. A new window is proposed in the gable for the Family Bathroom. The existing wall (from the 20<sup>th</sup> Century) between the stairs and proposed kitchen will be strengthened to support the proposed structure above, as required.
- The formation of the new (slightly raised) roof will require some minor modification of the existing rafters which form the valleys with the existing roof extension. Care has been taken in the design of the new roof to avoid any disturbance of the existing roof over the former parlour in the southernmost 'cell' of the original plan.
- The proposed, raised pitched roof (plain tile) over the existing rear extensions will be aligned with the proposed Dining Room to simplify this element of the building and reduce visual "clutter" thereby enhancing views of the original building.
- 1no. Conservation rooflight will be installed on the north face of this roof, providing natural light to the proposed Family Bathroom



*Existing rear elevation showing cluttered arrangement of ad-hoc extensions built during the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*



*Proposed rear elevation showing raised accommodation to Waterdell Lane, removal of heavily glazed extension and reconfiguration of existing first floor extension to accommodate proposed bathroom*

#### Existing Extension – adjacent to No.4 High Street

- Removal of existing concrete slab to install a new, insulated concrete slab to improve thermal performance and accessibility of the building.
- Creation of new openings in existing blockwork walls and plasterboard partitions in rear extensions to create better connections between entrance and living accommodation.
- Existing glazed entrance hallway removed from plan (consented 24/00796/FP and 24/00725/LBC)
- New glazed front door, powder-coated aluminium.
- New window to hallway, powder-coated aluminium.
- Existing felt roof (in poor condition and failing) to be replaced with single-ply membrane roof and fixed rooflights allowing natural light into internal spaces, essential to improve quality of space in the deep plan in this location.
- The footprint of the proposed extension in this location is within the footprint previously occupied by PH accommodation and the parapet of the proposed extension falls below the 45° line from the centre of the ground floor window at 4 High Street (assumed position).
- A hardwood pergola is proposed for the garden area, in part to train the Wisteria off the car-port (see block plan).

## 6.0 Assessment of the Impact of the Proposed Works

A Heritage Impact Statement has been prepared by Ward Booth Partnership and accompanies this submission. It includes a thorough Heritage Impact Assessment.

The Heritage Impact Statement concludes that *“The application proposal will result in public benefit, it is justified in accordance with NPPF requirements and the proposed scheme of works should be accepted as being of net positive benefit for the historic built environment.*

*I would commend the application to the Council and would respectfully request that planning permission and Listed Building Consent should be granted.”*

## **7.0 Accessibility**

The application site currently contains a single dwelling house with access from the High Street and via the garden (from Waterdell Lane). Car parking is provided in the previously consented carport at the end of the garden. No changes are proposed to the existing access arrangements, vehicular or pedestrian.

Access within the dwelling will be improved at Ground Floor level with the 20<sup>th</sup> Century concrete slab levelled throughout (to the rear of the High Street accommodation), allowing step-free access throughout this area.