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The Studio,
6 Marsworth Wharf
Tring
Buckinghamshire
HP23 4BW
t: 01442 828201
e: chris@atelier-architects.co.uk

Design, Access and Heritage Statement

Roe Green Barn, Roe Green, Sandon, SG9 0QE

Single storey extension, linking dwelling to annexe

1. The Process

1(a) Physical context

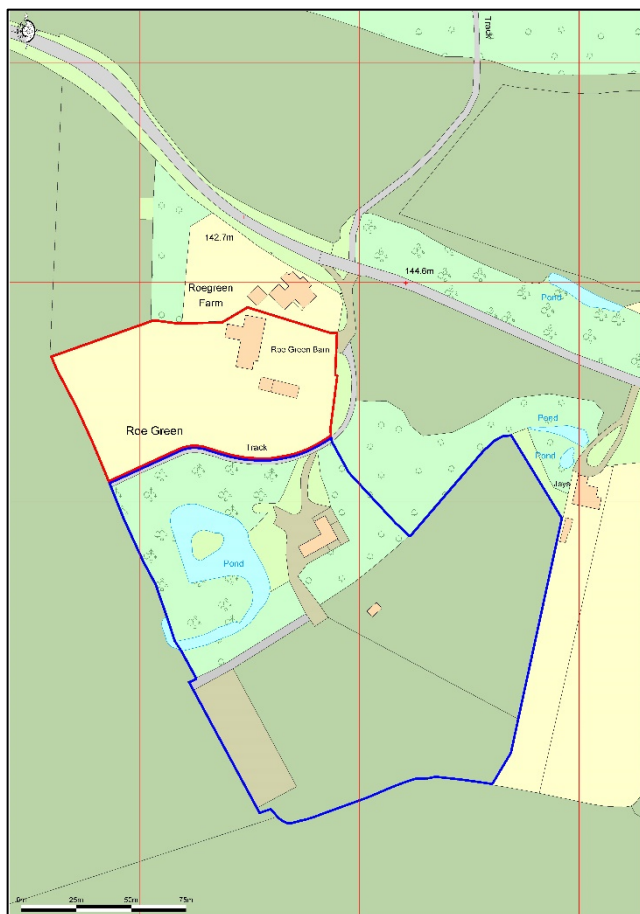


Figure 1 – Site Location Plan

Roe Green Barn is a two-storey detached dwellinghouse, which was converted from a timber framed barn (Photo 1). It is a Grade II listed building located within the western boundary of Roe Green Conservation Area. It is set back from the road and is partially screened by the neighbouring Grade II listed Roe Green House, as well as by trees and hedges to the boundaries. It is set within expansive lawns, with areas of planting, driveways and paths (Figure 1). A separate outbuilding has been extended and converted to garaging and an annexe.



Photo 1 – Frontage of Roe Green Barn

Planning permission and listed building consents were granted for conversion of the barn into a residential dwelling in 2003 (03/01339/1 and 03/01338/1LB) and was converted in 2008 following listed building consent 06/00702/1LB. At that time the corrugated iron roofing was replaced with slate and various doors, windows and roof windows were inserted to facilitate its use as a dwelling. Also, the interior was subdivided and first floors inserted into the end bays of the five bay barn and into the rear extension.

On 17 June 2009, planning application 19/01450/FPH and listed building consent application 19/01451/LBC were granted for a two-storey rear and single storey side extensions to the rear wing of the barn, as well as internal and external alterations, which have been implemented (Photo 2).



Photo 2 – Rear of Roe Green Barn



Photo 3 – Front / side rear of outbuilding



Photo 4 – Side of barn and outbuilding

Alterations to the outbuilding to create a single storey annexe, garage and storage area were approved under planning permission 18/02344/FPH and listed building consent 18/02345/LBC on 15 November 2018 (Photos 3 and 4).

1(b) Social context

The proposal will not affect the social context of the area. The dwelling will remain in use as a single family dwellinghouse. The only neighbouring dwelling is Roe Green House, which is some distance to the north of the proposed extension. Due to the distance between the extension and Roe Green House and the single storey scale of the proposed extension, it will not result in any harm to the living conditions of the occupants of the neighbouring property.

1(c) Economic Context

The proposed development will have a negligible but positive effect on the economic context of the area by employing local consultants and builders.

1(d) Planning Policy context

The application proposal should be determined in accordance with the relevant policies in the Development Plan, as expressed in Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031 (adopted 8 November 2022)

- Policy SP5 – Countryside and Green Belt*
- Policy SP9 – Design and Sustainability*
- Policy SP12 – Green infrastructure, landscape and biodiversity*
- Policy SP13 – Historic environment*
- Policy CGB1 – Rural Areas beyond the Green Belt*
- Policy CGB4 – Existing buildings in the Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt*
- Policy D1 – Sustainable Design*
- Policy D2 – House extensions, replacement dwellings and outbuildings*
- Policy D3 – Protecting living conditions*
- Policy NE2 – Landscape*
- Policy HE1 – Designated heritage assets*

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The NPPF and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) are both important material considerations in planning decisions. Neither changes the statutory status of the Development Plan for decision making but policies of the Development Plan should be considered and applied depending on their degree of consistency with the NPPF.

PLANNING STATEMENT

The site is within a Rural Area beyond the Green Belt where Local Plan policy SP5 recognises the intrinsic importance of the countryside and states that the Council will operate a general policy of restraint through the application of its detailed policies.

Policy SP9 states that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development and that the Council will support new development where it is well designed and located and responds positively to its local context. It also states that proposals will be assessed against the Design SPD.

Policy SP12 seeks to ensure that the natural environment is protected and enhanced.

Policy SP13 states that great weight will be given to the conservation of heritage assets and the management of their settings.

Policy CGB1 sets out forms of development that will be granted in the Rural Areas beyond the Green Belt, including development relating to an existing rural building.

Policy CGB4 states that planning permission for the extension of buildings in the Rural Area will be granted provided that the resultant building(s) do not have a materially greater impact on the openness, purposes or general policy aims of the Rural Area beyond the Green Belt than the original building(s).

Policy D1 requires development to respond positively to the site's local context; take all reasonable opportunities, consistent with the nature and scale of the scheme, to:

- i. create or enhance public realm;
- ii. optimise the potential of the site by incorporating Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS);
- iii. reduce energy consumption and waste;
- iv. retain existing vegetation and propose appropriate new planting;
- v. maximise accessibility, legibility and physical and social connectivity both internally and with neighbouring areas;
- vi. future proof for changes in technology and lifestyle;
- vii. design-out opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour; and
- viii. minimise the visual impact of street furniture and parking provision;

and to have regard to the Design SPD, and any other relevant guidance;

Policy D2 requires house extensions to be sympathetic to the existing house in height, form, proportions, roof type, window details, materials and the orientation of the main dwelling.

Policy D3 requires development proposals not to cause unacceptable harm to living conditions for the occupants of the existing and neighbouring properties

Policy NE2 states that planning permission will be granted for development that does not cause unacceptable harm to the character or appearance of the surrounding area or the landscape character area in which the site is located, taking account of any suitable mitigation measures necessary to achieve this.

Policy HE1 requires planning applications relating to DHAs or their settings to be accompanied by a Heritage Statement. The policy states that planning permission for development proposals affecting DHAs will be granted where they:

- a) Enable the heritage asset to be used in a manner that secures its conservation and preserves its significance;
- b) Incorporate a palette of materials that make a positive contribution to local character or distinctiveness, where it is appropriate and justified; and
- c) Will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset, and this harm is outweighed by the public benefits of the development, including securing the asset's optimum viable use.

The proposed link extension, due to its small scale, compact relationship and subservience in scale to the host buildings, accords with local plan policy, as the resultant building will not have a materially greater impact on openness, the purposes or general policy aims of the Rural Area beyond the Green Belt than the original buildings.

The link extension is of good design, as it has been purpose designed and responds both to the existing structures and the site and landscape within which it is set. Its mixture of traditional and sympathetic contemporary design respects the existing structures in its height, form, proportions, roof type, window details, materials and the orientation of the main dwelling.

Although some pleached trees will need to be removed (Photo 4) to facilitate the proposal, these were planted by the owner of the property and do not form part of the natural landscape and the proposal will not result in any harm to the surrounding landscape.

HERITAGE STATEMENT

Designated Heritage Assets

Roe Green Barn is a Grade II listed building, which was added to the statutory list on 29 January 1986. Roe Green Farm House to the north of the barn was grade II listed on the same date and both are within Roe Green Conservation Area. All three are DHAs.

Statutory Duties

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act) provides the overarching statutory framework.

Section 16(2) of the Act requires that in considering whether to listed building consent for any works to a listed building, special regard shall be given to the desirability of preserving the

building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Section 66 of the Act requires that in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, special regard shall be given to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Section 72 of the Act, requires special attention to be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas.

National Guidance

The NPPF provides an overarching planning framework, which local planning policy must apply. Additional detail is provided by the Planning Practice Guide (PPG), which provides more practical guidance on how the policies laid down within the NPPF should be interpreted and implemented.

Paragraphs 207 and 208 of the NPPF provide advice on the appropriate level of detail required to assess the significance of heritage assets, which include listed buildings, and to determine planning applications accordingly.

Paragraphs 212, 213, 214 and 215 provide guidance on assessing development proposals that affect designated heritage assets, including listed buildings. Where a proposed development would lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset, local authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss and where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. However, these benefits need not be restricted to heritage ones, as acknowledged in paragraph 155 of English Heritage Conservation Policies and Guidance in Conservation Principles.

Paragraph 003 of the PPG states that "*The conservation of heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance is a core planning principle.*

Paragraph 017 of the PPG states that "*While the impact of total destruction is obvious, partial destruction is likely to have a considerable impact but, depending on the circumstances, it may still be less than substantial harm or conceivably not harmful at all, for example, when removing later inappropriate additions to historic buildings which harm their significance. Similarly, works that are moderate or minor in scale are likely to cause less than substantial harm or no harm at all. However, even minor works have the potential to cause substantial harm*".

Guidance on heritage issues is provided in the Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Notes 1 (GPA1), 2 (GPA2) and 3 (GPA3) published by Historic England in July 2015. Advice Note GPA1 deals with the Historic Environment in Local Plans and is not directly relevant to this proposal but Advice Notes GPA2 and GPA3 deal with Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment and Settings and Views, respectively, and are of relevance to the assessment of the proposal.

Advice Notes GPA2 and GPA3 are a material consideration in the determination of planning and listed building consent applications and appeals relating to proposals affecting the historic environment. With respect to works requiring listed building consent paragraph 25 of GPA2 states:

"In deciding applications for planning permission and listed building consent, local planning authorities will need to assess the particular significance of the heritage asset(s) which may be affected by the proposal and the impact of the proposal on that significance reflecting the approach as described in paragraphs 3-5 above. In most cases, to assess significance LPAs will need to take expert advice, whether in-house, from shared services or from consultants."

Paragraph 29 states that:

"Change to heritage assets is inevitable but it is only harmful when significance is damaged. The nature and importance of the significance that is affected will dictate the proportionate response to assessing that change, its justification, mitigation and any recording which may be needed if it is to go ahead."

Advice Note GPA3 acknowledges that sustainable development can have an important positive impact on heritage assets by bringing abandoned buildings back into use or giving a heritage asset further life.

The purpose of this statement is to describe and assess the significance of the designated heritage assets that would be affected by the proposed extensions and alterations to Roe Green Barn, in accordance with the requirements of paragraph 207 of the NPPF.

The Evaluation and Design section of this statement, will include an assessment of the significance of the existing structures and whether the proposal will have an acceptable impact upon Roe Green Barn, Roe Green House and Roe Green Conservation Area.

The assessment has been carried out by consulting documentary evidence, including list descriptions, historic maps and by observations of the structures on site.

2. Involvement

A request for pre-application advice was requested from the local planning authority for a similar but larger scale proposal, which incorporated additional accommodation within the proposed link. Advice was received by letter 25/02297/PREH dated 23 January 2026.

The advice stated that the proposal would constitute a large extension to the dwelling that would detract from the visual appearance of the Rural Area, but recognised that as it would not have any visibility from the public realm and would retain a large garden (Photo 5), the harm to the Rural Area would be limited.

The Conservation Officer considered that the previous proposal would have had a moderate impact on the building's special character, harming the significance if he listed barn. He considered the significant use of glazed elements would have an erosive impact on the barn's special character. However, he stated that he would be "more receptive to a link" and that there may be a case for extending the aisle to the barn in weatherboarding and slate.



Photo 5 – View over rear garden

3. Evaluation and Design

The objectives of the proposal are to create a link between the existing dwelling and the detached annexe. The link will allow elderly relatives and other guests to use the annexe without the need for going outside, which is particularly undesirable during the winter months.

The main issues in this case are whether the proposal would harm the special architectural or historic interest of Roe Green Barn or Roe Green Farm House, or the character or appearance of Roe Green Conservation Area, or their significance as Designated Heritage Assets (DHA).

Roe Green Barn

The list description states that Roe Green Barn is of C17 or C18 origin. However, the HER identifies it as being circa C16.

Roe Green Barn is a 5-bay aisled timber framed barn with a steeply pitched hipped slate roof with gablets and black stained weatherboarded walls of red brick plinths. To the eastern elevation, the aisle to the left of the entrance stops before the final bay.

From my observations of the timber frame, it appears that the timbers are from different eras and the main posts have a mixture of jowl details where they meet the main tie beams. This may indicate that parts of the barn were rebuilt or repaired and explain the different origin dates attributed to the barn. It is now converted to a dwelling with first floors inserted in both end bays and within the recently extended C20 wing to the rear.

The significance of Roe Green Barn as a DHA results primarily from the architectural form of the main range of the building and the materials and method of its construction. Its remaining timber framing is its most important attribute.

Roe Green House

Roe Green House is a timber framed farmhouse, which has been encased in brick, rendered and colour washed. It has predominantly plain clay tiled roofs but one wing is weathered in slate. The list description states that it is C17 or earlier and that it was extended and part rebuilt in the late C19. The HER states that it was built in circa 1580. An aerial photograph is at Figure 2 dating from before 2003, when permission was granted for the separation and conversion of Roe Green Barn to a dwelling, shows the form of Roe Green House and its relationship to Roe Green Barn.



Figure 2 – Historic aerial photograph of Roe Green House and Roe Green Barn

Roe Green Conservation Area

Roe Green Conservation Area was designated in 1970 and has a Conservation Area Character Statement that was published by NHDC in November 2019. This identifies that the Conservation Area encompasses two branches of Rushden Road running through the hamlet, focussing on a large village green at its centre and that the village green is central to the character of Roe Green Conservation Area. It also identifies that there are uninhibited views across Roe Green, incorporating a low density of largely historic buildings scattered around the green. Accordingly, the area is instilled with a distinctive open and rural character.

The Character Statement identifies that the western edge of the Conservation Area boundary is devoid of housing, instead occupied by the 17th century Roe Green Farm. Since the publication of the Character Statement, the barn at Roe Green Farm has been converted to a dwelling and is known as Roe Green Barn and the farmhouse is now known as Roe Green House. The two buildings are identified as key assets but the application site does not fall within the key views identified and does not include any significant tree areas or individual trees.

The Proposal

The proposed works represent a C21 century evolution of the use of the barn as a dwelling, reflecting the current day lifestyle and desires of its occupants. The link extension will have a light touch on the existing buildings (Figures 3 and 4), but as suggested by the Conservation Officer in pre-application advice the first section follows the form and materials of the aisle to the listed barn and the amount of glazing has been significantly reduced.

In my opinion, the proposed link extension will be of high-quality contemporary design and materials that compliments its heritage context and does not interrupt the legibility of the form of the original barn. It is my view that the proposed extension will not harm the special architectural or historic interest of Roe Green Barn or its significance as a DHA.

In the long term, the provision of a link that reflects the desires and needs of a modern-day family will aid the retention of the property in its viable use as a single family dwellinghouse and encourage investment in the upkeep of the building. This is in the public interest in accordance with NPPF guidance.

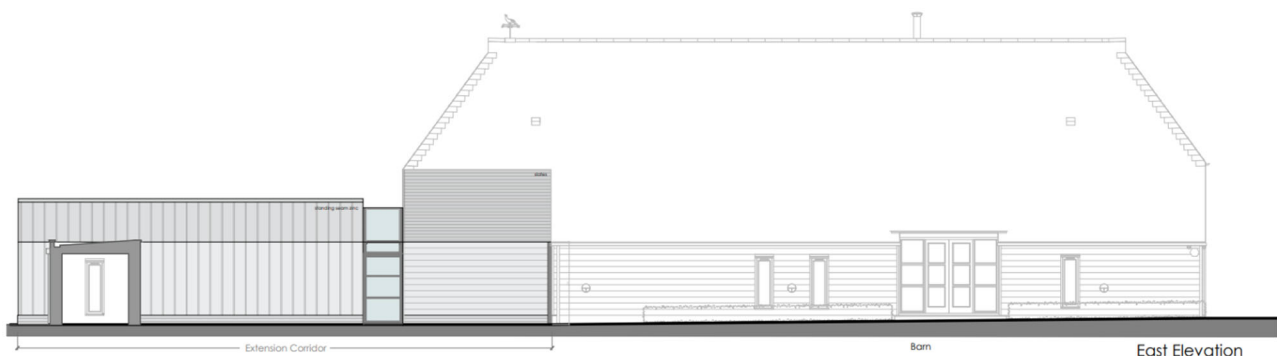


Figure 3 – East elevation of proposed link extension between dwelling (barn) and annexe

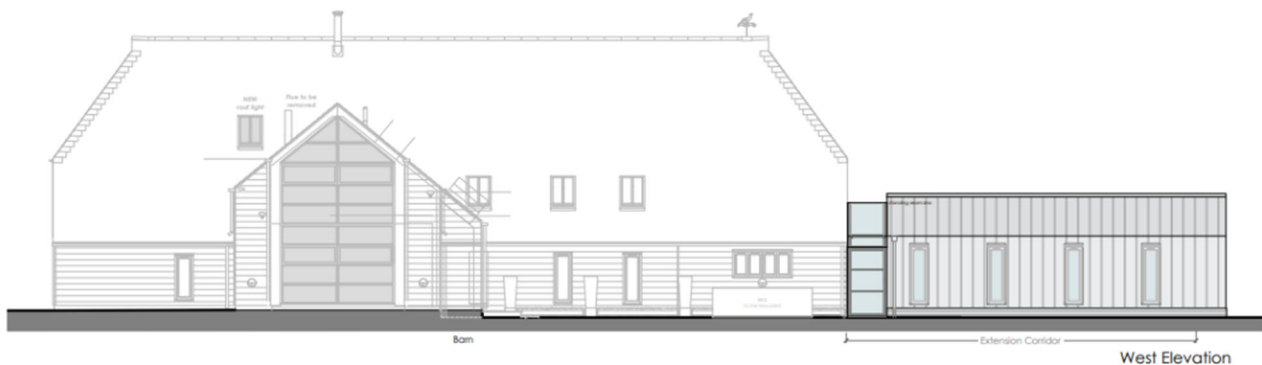


Figure 4 – West elevation of proposed link extension between dwelling (barn) and annexe

I consider the works to be acceptable and that any harm would be at the lowest level of less than substantial to the significance of Roe Green Barn as a DHA but in my view, this would be outweighed by the benefits, as set out above.

The visual connection between Roe Green House and Roe Green Barn is now very limited due to the intervening boundary. The proposed extension will be situated in a location that is discreet and where, historically, the farm yard extended to and was occupied by buildings (Figure 2). Therefore, I consider that the proposal will not cause any harm to the setting of Roe Green House or its significance as a DHA. No alterations are proposed to the existing barn and access

between the barn and the link will be via the existing external door opening serving the boot room and utility room.



Photos 6 and 7 – Timber framing and glazing at end of aisle within lounge

The proposal will not affect any identified characteristic of the Roe Green Conservation Area or any important views. The discreet and low scale nature of the proposal and use of materials will also ensure that no harm is caused to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area or its significance as a DHA.

4. Use

This use is residential, which is compatible with surrounding land uses.

5. Amount

The gross external floor area of the proposed extension is 41.5 m².

6. Layout

The layout of the site will remain unchanged.

7. Scale

The scale of the proposed extension is single storey and the scale of the existing buildings will remain unchanged.

8. Landscaping

A group of pleached trees will be removed in order to facilitate the development but this will have an insignificant effect on the landscaping of the site and the surrounding landscape.

9. Appearance

The main element of the proposed link extension has a dual pitched roof and walls that are to be clad in zinc sheeting with an anthracite grey finish and standing seams. A glazed section provides visual separation between it and the extended aisle to the barn, which is to be clad in black stained weatherboarding with a slate roof to match the barn. A low mono-pitched element is to link the main element of the link extension to the low-pitched existing extension to the rear of the outbuilding, which is used as an annex. This is also clad in anthracite grey zinc sheeting with standing seams. All windows and doors are to be framed in black powder coated aluminium to match the windows and doors to the barn and annex.

The design and appearance of the proposed extension is sympathetic to the form, scale and materials of both the house and annexe.

10. Access

There is no access issue.

Christopher Higenbottam BA BArch DipBCons AA
Architectural and Heritage Consultant, Atelier Architecture + Design