

► Impact Statement – Listed Building Consent

Fox Hall, Wynnstay Estate, Ruabon, Wrexham, LL14 6LA

Proposal for changes to the garden area for the above mentioned property.

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Wynnstay Hall is a grade II* listed building sitting within parkland, part of which is Grade I listed. It was the principal seat of the Williams-Watkins-Wyn family until 1945, when it was sold to Lindisfarne College to be used as a new site for the school's relocation to Wales. Following closure of the school the hall was subdivided into several homes. Fox Hall forms part of the main hall building. The grounds to the front of the hall now form private gardens for some of these properties. These gardens are raised by around 4 feet in comparison to the surrounding landscape.

When the main building was converted to individual properties, it was carried out piecemeal and not necessarily thought through. As such it is complicated, incoherent and not in keeping with a building of this size and stature. There were various developers on this site, at least 4 in the main hall building which is why the split isn't coherent and a unified vision hasn't been applied.

The garden wall at the point of listing went straight across the entire south side of the building, when the conversion was carried out, steps were created at 3 points along this wall for those properties (The Chateau, The Library and The Great Hall). The proposal is to create the same access for Fox Hall to maintain continuity across the front of the building. The original intended wall has long since disappeared, by moving my access to the end, the impact on the building will be reduced in terms of keeping its symmetry and unifying the front façade of the building.

There has been a building on this site for over 400 years, the vaulted cellars from 1616 are underneath Fox Hall. I want to bring back to life the features of this beautiful building, but also make it habitable for family life. Many of the changes were brought about when it was a school, but they still remain part of the fabric of this building.

The proposed access steps will be constructed from the same stone as the garden wall, using the same coping stones and styling.

As it currently stands access to my property is by walking across a neighboring property's garden. The proposal would be to move the garden and property access point to the bottom of the garden to match the other homes on this side of the hall.

By moving the entrance point to Fox Hall it will bring the property in line with others. It will allow for structural repairs to the garden wall itself which has suffered from lack of maintenance and negative impact of unsuitable planting. Improve security and privacy for neighbor's garden, which is currently walked across.

From my research the original garden wall modelled in the 1880's was curved to the centre of the hall which was originally a window, at some point the wall was made straight across although the window remained. The archway was made into a door when it was converted in the early 2000's which is also when the 5 houses on this side had windows removed to replace with doors to make individual properties.

This is a magnificent building, the austere façade will shine with improved access and planting. It is currently incoherent, we seek to bring it all together and create a family home to be cherished for generations to come.

First and foremost this is a family home and the garden needs to be an area of safety for my children. In order to minimize impact on the grounds and surrounding properties, I am proposing sinking the trampoline into the ground, making it less visible.

During the cutting back of the garden I have found many detailed pieces of sandstone which would of

once graced different parts on the Hall. It would certainly allow for investigations into what was thrown into the gardens when they were built up following conversion.

From my understanding the gardens were built up to a higher level when the building was completed.

Following a visit from a fire safety officer concerns were raised regarding the cellar access in my property. The current access is inside the property but due to the size of the cellar a further exit is required. I would like to propose re-opening one of the original cellar access points. Doing this will have the least impact on the building and grounds but importantly improve safety.

What is now my front door and only access point to my property was originally a window, the bottom part being removed to create a doorway. The existing doors do not lock and are very thin, making them invalid for security and insurance. The new doors will be a replica of the current doors and painted white to match the windows. It will be made of oak with a locking mechanism meeting current standards and door furniture to match existing.

The cellar access will use Ruabon brick for the bottom part of the steps, for the garden steps it will be stone to match the building. The door will be oak, although not visible from the garden or neighboring houses.

I fully understand the importance and significance of this estate, my intention is to appreciate the history and fabric, not to remove or damage but to show empathy for its past and enthusiasm for its future.

There are currently 2 sheds in my garden, they are not attached in any way to the house, these will be removed once the cellar access has been resolved.

The sash windows will be restored and repainted along with the gully used for drainage. This is something I will discuss with the conservation officer as the lead originally used has long since been removed.

This is first and foremost my family home, we previously had an above ground trampoline, however I am conscious that my garden is 5 ft higher than the surrounding grounds making it more visible. With sinking the trampoline into the ground it will mitigate the visual impact to the building. This is also an incredibly windy site, by being sunken it will prevent any damage to the building and gardens in the event of storms. The area which forms my garden does not form part of the listed landscape of the estate but it needs to fit into its environment while being a family home.