

BA3043 - Raggs Hill Shieling, Whitchurch Road, Wrexham, Clwyd, LL13 0BD

Design and Access Statement

Full planning application for the proposed extension and remodelling of an existing family home and associated landscaping.

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Executive Summary

- The application is for the extension of an existing family dwelling.
- The design looks to remove the unattractive and poorly constructed existing single-storey link corridor between the two wings of the house and replace with a habitable extension.
- The extension will have a flat roof, replacing the clumsy and poorly constructed existing pitched roof of the link and therefore reducing the height of the house in this area whilst also allowing more focus upon the two existing barns.
- Minor amendments to the external materials and the incorporation of new window and door openings plus replacement of existing windows and doors throughout.
- The tired and unmanaged rear courtyard and front terrace will be revitalised with new planting, soft and hard surfaces.
- Sketch options were explored in the initial stages to achieve the best layout to satisfy the applicant's aspiration for the dwelling.

1 Introduction

This statement forms part of the planning application for the proposed extension and remodel of a single-storey family home at Raggs Hill Shieling, Whitchurch Road, Wrexham. The house was built in the 1990's by the previous owners in what was deemed at the time to be a progressive style of architecture and build.

In March 2009 planning permission was granted for the conversion of the garage into living accommodation with a new single storey extension to link the new accommodation to the existing house plus associated site access arrangements (application no: P/2008/1297). It is this single-storey link that we propose to remove and replace with a habitable extension space.

The existing property consists of 6 bedrooms plus a study and has a large open-plan living and dining area. The property is set in approximately 3 acres of grounds and enjoys southerly views across farmland and woodlands.

The home suffers from a dated appearance and poor detailing and construction, with leaks that originate from the roof and window apertures a regular concern for the owners. Our proposals will seek to modernise and improve both the appearance, massing and performance of the dwelling.

This statement is to be read in conjunction with the associated supporting documents including:

- Application Form
- EX-001 Existing Ground Floor Plan
- EX-002 Existing Elevations
- PL-001 Site Location Plan
- PL-002 Site Plan
- PL-101 Proposed Ground Floor Plan
- PL-102 Proposed Roof Plan
- PL-103 Proposed Elevations
- PL-104 Proposed Landscape Plan
- PL-105 Proposed 3D Visualisations
- PL-106 Proposed 3D Visualisations
- PL-107 Proposed 3D Visualisations

2 The Location and Context



Aerial View of Raggs Hill Shieling, Wrexham

2.1 The Location

Raggs Hill Shieling is located approximately 6 miles to the south east of Wrexham town centre and circa 10 miles west of Whitchurch situated on the Whitchurch Road (A525) at Bangor on Dee. The elevated site benefits from far-reaching southerly views across farmland and woodland.

2.2 Context

The site is located along Whitchurch Road (A525) which is the principal vehicular route between Wrexham and Whitchurch and is the only access road to the site. The local amenities of Bangor-is-y-coed are a short distance away along the A525.

The property, formally known as Orchard Farm, was converted from agricultural farm buildings to a single residential dwelling in 1997 (RLP/SLJ or CB/1015), together with garden area and vision splay and alteration to existing vehicular access. Some of the associate land was also purchased from the local water board back in 1945 and again in 1955. The site is now accessed by a long private driveway from the A525 which was formed in 2009 during the property's last redevelopment (application no: P/2008/1297). There is an area of car parking to the west of the dwelling with an accompanying detached triple garage. The dwelling is positioned to the south of the A525 and set back a distance of circa 15m, with a substantial area of lawn and trees positioned between the highway and the property. The existing building comprises of two single-storey rectilinear buildings with pitched roofs; the original property to the west and the former garage (redeveloped to accommodation) to the east, adjoined by a single storey pitched roof walkway link. The latter two elements form the 2009 redevelopment (application no: P/2008/1297). The entire property is predominately brick facing with domestic scale windows and doors, albeit sporadically arranged windows along all elevations. The original home, the western wing of the property, has a large ridge skylight that runs circa 11m along the property. This west wing comprises the kitchen, utility, dining and living space with four bedrooms and two en-suites. The eastern wing comprises the master bedroom and en-suite, the sixth bedroom, family bathroom and a cinema/play room. This gradual extending of the building at varying points in time has created a chaotic and clumsy appearance with little coherence between the spaces. The pitched roof of the link corridor clashes in both form and functionality with the pitched roofs of the two main blocks, resulting in both an unattractive appearance and a failing roof detail, with water ingress and leaks.

The existing building is in a very poor condition, with a leaking roof and windows plus damaged and unattractive exterior finishes.



Above: The existing south elevation of the pitched roof corridor link - to be demolished



Top Left: Existing master bedroom French doors, Top Right: Living area terrace access, Bottom Left: Primary entrance, Bottom Right: Garage and entrance door



Left: Existing living area



Right: Existing roof-light that runs the length of the corridor

3 Design

3.1 Design Brief

This application is for the proposed extension and remodelling of an existing family dwelling.

The design brief is to incorporate a more defined, formal and pronounced principal entrance, to remodel the interior spaces and provide an open and flowing kitchen, living and dining space that bridges and unites the rear courtyard and front terrace. The brief also seeks to review the existing roof-line and massing of the dwelling.

The initial design brief was to explore the following works:

- Review existing floor plan to understand the available area for development.
- Develop layouts for a remodelled dwelling with emphasis on large open-plan family living and storage space.
- Utilise existing fenestration where possible.
- Review existing circulation arrangements and a more welcoming and defined principal entrance.
- Review the existing roof-line and massing of the property.

3.2 Design Development

Sketch options were explored in the initial stages of the design to achieve the best layout and relationship of rooms to satisfy the applicant's aspirations for the property.

These options explored the design that would achieve the most appropriate family living and kitchen space, bedroom layouts and sizes whilst trying to best utilise the existing circulation and fenestration.

Throughout the design development stage careful consideration was given to designing an extension that was subservient to the existing property whilst also improving the massing of the dwelling and addressing the roof-line.

Another point of consideration in the design development was how best to limit circulation space and corridors, in order to maximise the available area for the habitable spaces and provide connection between the external spaces, particularly the northern courtyard and the southern terrace and lawn areas.



Interior visuals of the proposed open-plan kitchen, living and dining area

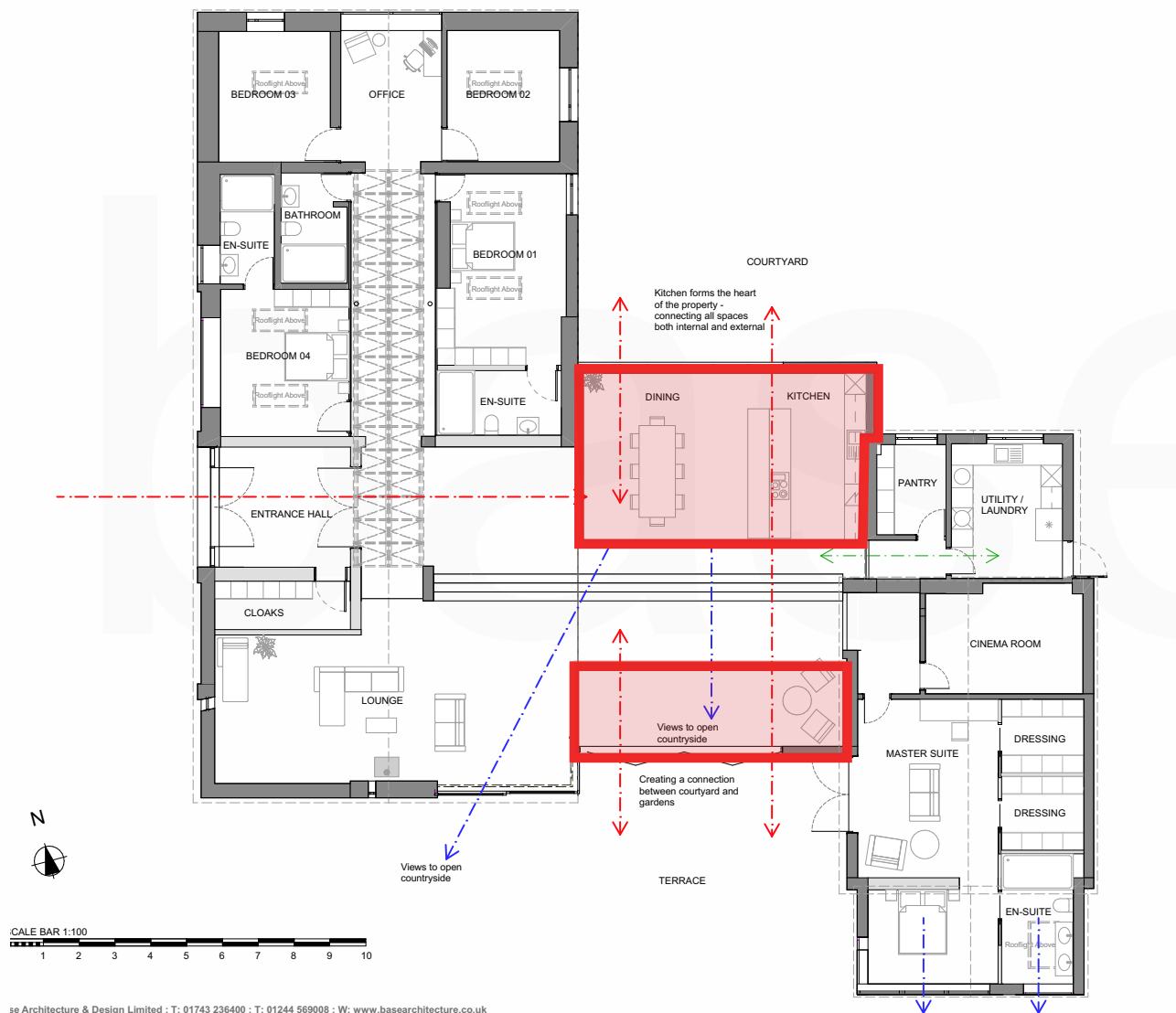
3.3 Design Proposal

Following this initial development the proposed layouts were further refined to provide the optimal use of space throughout the property. This internal space review and comparative analysis of the proposed sketch options highlighted an opportunity to further improve the internal space.

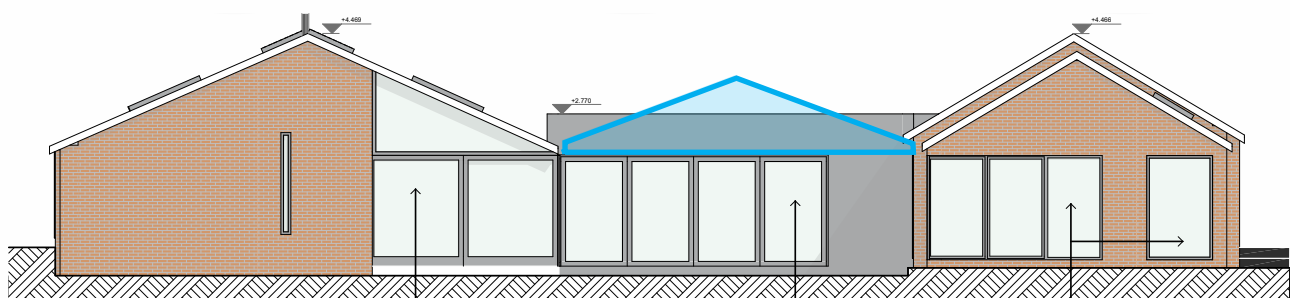
The proposal utilises most existing window and door openings with new aperture positions required in certain instances to provide the key habitable spaces with natural light and ventilation. These new window positions also improve the proportions and general aesthetic of the external appearance, helping to eradicate the clumsy and disorganised appearance of the existing window locations and sizes.

The proposal seeks to make the following internal and external modifications to the property:

- As illustrated overleaf, the proposal seeks to construct an extension to the building footprint (highlighted in red). This includes the removal of the single-storey pitched roof link and replaces it with a single-storey flat-roof habitable space that will form part of the kitchen, dining and family living space.
- The extension will be a total floor area increase of 69sqm to the dwelling, with 49sqm added to the north and 20sqm to the south of the property, either side of the existing link footprint.
- The pitched roof of the link will be removed and replaced with a flat roof structure. This will lower the height of the central area of the property from its current 4.06m ridge height to circa 3.16m height, a reduction of circa 900mm in height. (Highlighted in blue overleaf)
- This reduction in height and form will provide a subservient central extension that seeks to modernise and improve both the appearance, massing and performance of the dwelling, helping to remove the clumsy aesthetic of the roof-line and eradicate the failing roof junctions and gulleys that have caused leaking.
- The remodelling of internal spaces will retain most existing window apertures, which will be replaced with new frames and glazing to improve the aesthetic and performance.
- New window and door apertures will also be created and will include a set of sliding doors either side of the new extension to provide a visual and physical connection between the north courtyard and south terrace and lawn. This will create a spacious, light and well ventilated central circulation core and family living/kitchen/dining space.
- New south-facing windows will be incorporated to the east wing master bedroom and en-suite to maximise light and take advantage of the spectacular views, with a celestrial window incorporated to the west elevation to retain privacy in the newly located bedroom from the driveway.
- A series of new roof-lights will be incorporated to the various bedrooms, whilst the existing ridge skylight will be removed and replaced.
- A new guest WC, pantry, utility room and storage space will further enhance the newly remodelled interior spaces.
- A newly formed enclosed hallway provides privacy, security and formality to the principal entrance.
- The existing entrance driveway and gates from Whitchurch Road will be retained as the main building entry point.
- A new parking area will be positioned close to the principal entrance door, with new raised planters, paths and multiple social seating areas created across the landscape design improves the physical and visual connections throughout the dwelling.



Above. Proposed Ground Floor - Red areas signify extended footprint



Above. Proposed South Elevation - Blue area reduced in height

3.4 Planning History

There are three previous planning applications associated with the property submitted to Wrexham County Borough Council website:

Planning Application RLP/SLJ or CB/1015

Conversion of farm buildings into one dwelling together with garden area and vision splay, alteration to existing vehicular access and installation of septic tank at Orchard Farm, Bangor on Dee, Wrexham.

Planning Application P/2008/1297

Conversion of garage to provide living accommodation, formation of single storey extensions to north and south sides and construction of detached garage

Planning Application P/2011/0907

Formation of new vehicular access to existing dwelling with permanent closure of existing vehicular access



External visual of the east elevation - approaching the dwelling entrance from the drive



External visual of the proposed south elevation from the lawn area

3.5 Use

The application does not involve a change of use.

3.6 Scale

As illustrated on the previous pages, the footprint of the building will be slightly increased by 69sqm due to the proposed single-storey extension. The proposal introduces a reduced height and reconfiguration of the central roof, which will drop by approx 900mm in height from the existing ridge line down to the new flat roof. The flat roof will be subservient to the existing pitched roofs of the west and east wings.

3.7 Appearance

The removal of the central pitched roof and narrow corridor together with the construction of the flat roof replacement extension will eradicate the clumsy, dated and poorly-maintained aesthetic of the roof-line, roof junctions and gulleys, whilst modernising the appearance and massing of the property. There will be numerous new window and door apertures to help maximise sunlight into the internal spaces, with an extensive replacement of all existing windows and doors throughout the property. There will be material changes to the facade, including a grey cladding (material tbc) to the extension and possible aluminium (tbc) window frames to replace the aging timber.

3.8 Landscaping

Extensive new landscaping will formalise the garden immediately surrounding the property. This will include new hard landscaping, paths and low level walls that house raised planters, with potted plants and shrubs to allow for easy maintenance. The raised planters will consist of brick or stone (or similar) walls that help to navigate the level changes on site. The existing courtyard found to the north of the property will be formalised with planters and hardscaping, with a formal grass lawn both to the rear and front of the property. The wider landscape beyond the immediate curtilage of the dwelling will remain as meadow grass, shrubbery and a large existing pond. The large trees and bushes to the north of the property between the dwelling and the A525 will remain untouched, continuing to act successfully as a natural acoustic and privacy screen from the road.



External visuals of the southern terrace (left) and northern courtyard (right)

3.9 Renewable Energies

The client wishes to utilise renewable energies within the property and has a particular interest in solar energy. It is proposed that solar panels could be located onto the flat roof of the extension in order to maximise the southerly sun path. This area is highlighted on the roof plan drawing accompanying this application (PL-102 Proposed Roof Plan). We will also continue to explore the possible use of air source and ground source heat pumps. Plant and any manifold systems will be located in the existing garage.

4 Access & Highways

There will be no changes to the existing access into the site. The clients will continue to access the property via the long drive from the A525 Whitchurch Road through the security gates into a generous parking and turning area.

5 Drainage & Flooding

5.1 Drainage

The existing drainage will be utilised as part of the proposed works.

5.2 Flooding

The site is not at risk of flooding and the proposed works will not introduce a risk of flooding.

6 Conclusion

- The proposal is for the removal of an existing single-storey pitched roof link corridor linking two aspects of a dwelling with a flat roof single-storey extension, seeing an approx footprint increase of 69sqm.
- Highways safety would not be compromised by the proposals.
- The proposals would not contravene any local or national planning policy guidelines.
- The proposals would not have an adverse impact on neighbouring properties.
- The proposals will create much needed modernisation and improvement (both aesthetic and performance) to the existing dwelling.



External visual of the dwelling from the northern courtyard