

MILL HOUSE, MARCHWIEL HALL, MARCHWIEL, WREXHAM

DESIGN ACCESS STATEMENT AND JUSTIFICATION

Rev A – November 2019

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1.0 INTRODUCTION



Lawray Architects have been appointed to develop a scheme to refurbish the property and add an extension to create a modern home suitable for C21st living. It is of much importance that the historical and cultural significance of the existing Grade II listed dwelling is retained.

This application seeks to gain approval for the following items:

- **Refurbishment of existing property including internal works**
- **Refurbishment of existing dwelling including internal works**
- **Proposed two-storey extension to the west of the dwelling**
- **Proposed basement level extension to be hidden from ground level view**
- **Replacement separate outbuilding to match extension and keep original form and size of existing outbuilding**
 - **Re-instating the original porch onto existing dwelling**
 - **Demolition of dilapidated timber porch/balcony to the northern elevation of the dwelling**
 - **Demolition of garden wall on northern elevation (later addition which currently spoils elevation as seen in above photograph)**
- **Proposed installation of new period windows to match the original style.**
- **Proposed installation of new external doors with a more complimentary style and material.**

This design access statement has been prepared to accompany a full planning application and listed building consent for the above-proposed works to Mill House. It is a comprehensive document that aims to provide a written and illustrated commentary when reading in conjunction with the associated design drawings and Heritage Impact Assessment.

2.0 SITE

The Mill House is a Grade II Listed Building (CADW Ref No: 17844) situated within the Marchwiel Estate and is thought to date to 1840. It is situated at the end of a track from the private drive of Marchwiel Hall.

The property is not within a conservation area but does form part of a small collection of buildings within a rural setting.

Site Address:

Mill House, Marchwiel, Wrexham, LL13 0SS



3.0 CHARACTER

The proposed re-modelling and extension endeavour to maintain the existing character of the building without adversely affecting the fabric or appearance of the building.

Cleaning, repair work and re-instating of original windows and the porch will retain and improve the aesthetics of the existing elevations.

The existing pitched roofs and chimneys appear to be in good condition and will not be affected by the works. The existing eaves will be retained, preserving the overall appearance of the house. Any replacement or repair works relating to eaves and verges will be consistent with and respond to the existing details.

The two-storey extension to the west will include new external walls and a new gabled pitched roof reflecting the general appearance and form of the existing building. The external finish will be in contrast with the existing house and stepped in height and width. The charred timber cladding compliments the blackened timber frame of the original tudor house whilst adopting a modern and contrasting aesthetic.

The proposal is considered to offer an improvement to the appearance of the listed building, offering consistency to openings and sympathetically detailed windows and doors, or re-using existing features where possible.

4.0 JUSTIFICATION

Following the advice received with the pre-application enquiry, the clients are keen to:

- **Protect the mill pit and archaeological features of the property.**
 - Although the mill pit is overgrown and no longer evident, it is an important archaeological feature, and thus the extension is suspended above ground level on steel columns which extend just beyond the historic wall. This distance provides the given width of the extension, at minimum clearance of the archaeological features. Details are awaiting consultation of a structural engineer, however, the steels and supporting foundation, including any constructional element of the extension, will not obstruct nor damage the mill pit, walls or any other archaeological features.
- **Replace the currently unsafe and dilapidated outbuilding.**
 - In a current state of disrepair, the outbuilding is proposed to be replaced with a new one-storey storage space and gym. Upon the recommendation of the ecologists, the outbuilding is a suitable size and location to provide the bat roost. To accommodate such, the ridge level of the original outbuilding has been raised 600mm for appropriate access and housing of the bats.
- **Re-instate/retain the appearance of the porch, doors and windows.**
 - Infilled openings will be stepped in on both the exterior and interior to retain the appearance of the original openings. On the exterior, the decorative doors will be insitu, retained and unaffected by the infill works and will appear as per the original elevation. The porch will be re-constructed as per the original dimensions as per the markings on the exterior, using blackened timber and slate roof.
 - Damaged or missing windows will be replaced to match the existing.
 - The decorative cast iron casement window to be affected by the extension will be retained and re-used on the same elevation, on the gable of the extension.
 - Two new proposed rooflights to be low profile, small conservation rooflights.
- **Partly remove the existing stone plinth to create doorway from kitchen.**
 - Required for access and lighting in the proposed kitchen.
 - The stone will be carefully removed and retained for use on the utility room, saved on site for future repair works or as otherwise conditioned. Photographic evidence is provided of the plinth, demonstrating the disrepair, movability and lack of bonding to the brick wall. This element of the works will be conditioned for further approval.
- **Lowering of the floor/ceiling level in a part of the mill building**
 - Required for access into extension at upper level, building regulation compliance and retention of layout and overall character

- The portion of ceiling to be lowered (west end of mill building) has been significantly altered in previous years, having joists cut for attic access, machinery installation and the fairly recent construction of a partition room. The new ceiling would be lowered from the point of but not including the 'substantial' western beam, and the ceiling would not extend below the underside of this beam.
- **Widen two interior openings to improve day lighting conditions, access and head heights.**
 - In two cases it is required to increase the width of the openings on the interior
 - On the first floor stairwell landing, there is insufficient light levels and a narrow landing off the stair currently creates a sense of constriction, by moving the partition wall 400mm (without affecting or moving beams) to the east and adding a conservation rooflight, the landing will be made suitable for a family home.
 - On the ground floor, the opening between the existing and proposed entrance halls is proposed to be widened to allow light into the new entrance hall. No timberwork or beams will be affected by this change.

Further to the external refurbishment works, the clients also seek to rationalise the overall form of the dwelling and create a more coherent building. The main elements of this are to:

- **Remove the current worn porch/balcony to the north elevation.**
 - This appears as though a later addition with an unflattering construction that detracts from the listed structure. The timber balcony is in poor condition and the corrugated iron roof and iron steps are unsympathetic to the listed dwelling and character of the building.
 - Also to remove the garden wall on the east of the same elevation as it is a later addition.
- **Infill the space between the bank wall and the house (previously north elevation porch) with basement extension.**
 - The new extension will infill the un-used space between the basement and the bank wall. The roof will be covered in earth and used as a small garden area. This will create the appearance of a continued ground level, disguise the extension and ensure the dwelling is suited to modern C21st living. It will also provide accommodation for a small utility room.
- **New / replacement / refurbished windows and doors**
 - One dormer window will be re-instated on the north elevation, and one refurbished. These will need to be assessed and remedial works proposed by a professional joiner. Following discussions with the Conservation Officer, this element will be conditioned for further approval.
 - One cast iron decorative window to the west elevation will be re-installed on the same elevation. This will need to be assessed and remedial works proposed by a professional joiner. Following discussions with the Conservation Officer, this element will be conditioned for further approval.

- Existing cast iron windows will be retained.
- New windows and doors will be dark/black painted softwood, with fenestration to match the original styles if replacements (please refer to the proposed elevations and window / door details for further information).

6.0 SUSTAINABILITY

Externally, timber work, render and brickwork will be cleaned and retained as existing. The central mill building's facade is showing significant weathering damage to the painted brick. It is proposed that the white paint is removed, so that the south and north elevations match the exposed brick of the existing west gable elevation.

Cast iron rainwater goods will be retained and refurbished as necessary. Any new rainwater goods will match existing.



White paint weathered on brick



Southern elevation showing weathering, paint discolouration and previous work marks

Internally, the property is in a significant state of disrepair and in need of refurbishment. The attached imagery aims to provide evidence of such and provide justification for some of the design decisions put forward.



Mill pit and archway to basement



Existing outbuilding



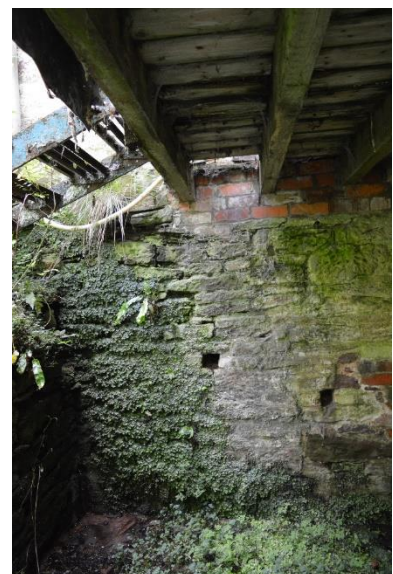
Markings of previous porch, new porch to be constructed in replacement



Stone plinth to be carefully removed where door is installed on south elevation and conditioned to stay on site



Existing porch, iron steps and balcony on north elevation



Space to be infilled by utility room



Example of decorative door and windows to be retained



Cut/alterd joists in proposed kitchen area, showing portion of ceiling to be lowered



Low light level in first floor landing



Doorway to be widened at entrance and affected wall, looking south and north



7.0 SAFETY

Further to the internal remedial works, additional internal works will include:

- **Removing portions of the existing external/internal walls.**
 - At ground floor, it is proposed to add an opening between the gable end of the dwelling and new replacement extension. This is required to form the new family room and open it up to the rest of the ground floor. This opening will also fill the end of the dwelling with south light.
 - Another ground floor opening will need to be formed within the existing portion of the building to connect the new kitchen with the new entrance hall and office.
 - The opening between the porch and entrance hall will also be widened to create a more open and uniform entrance space. This also allows the porch to receive light into the small space.
 - At first floor, two new openings will be formed to provide access between the Master bedroom, shower room and the existing landing. This is required for access.
 - The existing internal bathroom wall along the landing will be removed to provide a suitable landing and allow light into the space. A new stud wall will then be installed to form a shortened bathroom and wider landing space.
 - A new internal opening will also be formed on the first floor to open the landing for access to the proposed bedrooms.

- **Installing new internal doors, architraves, skirtings and coving.**
 - All new internal doors to match existing style and material.
 - Unfortunately, there is very little original joinery left within the dwelling. With most skirting, architraves and coving likely replaced in the 70's/80's. The clients will therefore install new skirtings and architraves of an appropriate style.

8.0 CONCLUSION

It is hoped that this design access statement, alongside the detail drawings and other documentation, has provided a comprehensive and robust package of information, which outlines the proposal and assesses the impact of the works on the architectural and historic significance of the listed structure.

The proposed works will bring the following benefits to both the client and occupants of the building:

- **Refurbishing the existing listed building will ensure the dwelling is suitable for modern C21st living.**
- **Removing and replacing the dilapidated outbuilding with an updated design will create a usable space, in a complimentary style to the extension for a unified appearance and provide accommodation for bats.**
- **Replacing, refurbishing and/or repairing the windows and porch in the original style will ensure the dwelling is more coherent overall in both form and materials.**
- **Improving the spatial quality inside the dwelling by increasing light levels and accessibility**

The proposed refurbishment and remedial works will improve the condition of the dwelling, increase the longevity of the listed building and improve the aesthetics of the immediate area.

It is felt that the proposals are complimentary to the existing dwelling, having been carefully designed with consideration given to the existing massing, scale, material and aesthetic of Mill House. The proposals should have no adverse impact to the character of the existing listed structure and will only help to preserve and strengthen the building's heritage.