FSP
NORTHERN ARCHITECTS LTD

PLANNING, DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

TO ACCOMPANY A PLANNING APPLICATION FOR MR A PHILLIPS

ALTERATIONS AND FIRST FLOOR SIDE EXTENSION TO EXISTING DWELLING AT THE MILL HOUSE, MANOR LANE, ROSSETT, WREXHAM LL12 0HL

IN ORDER TO PROVIDE MORE SUSTAINABLE AND FLOOD RESISTANT RESIDENTIAL ACCOMMODATION FOR THE OCCUPANTS, INCLUDING ALTERATION TO WINDOWS AND DOORS

16 October 2026



Objectives

Structural alterations to raise the ground and first floors above their existing levels and improve the flood resistance and resilience of the building fabric in order to lessen the impact of flooding damage.

Raising of windows and doors within the elevations to serve the amended internal floor levels whilst maintaining the characteristic style and detailing of architectural elements from the present design.

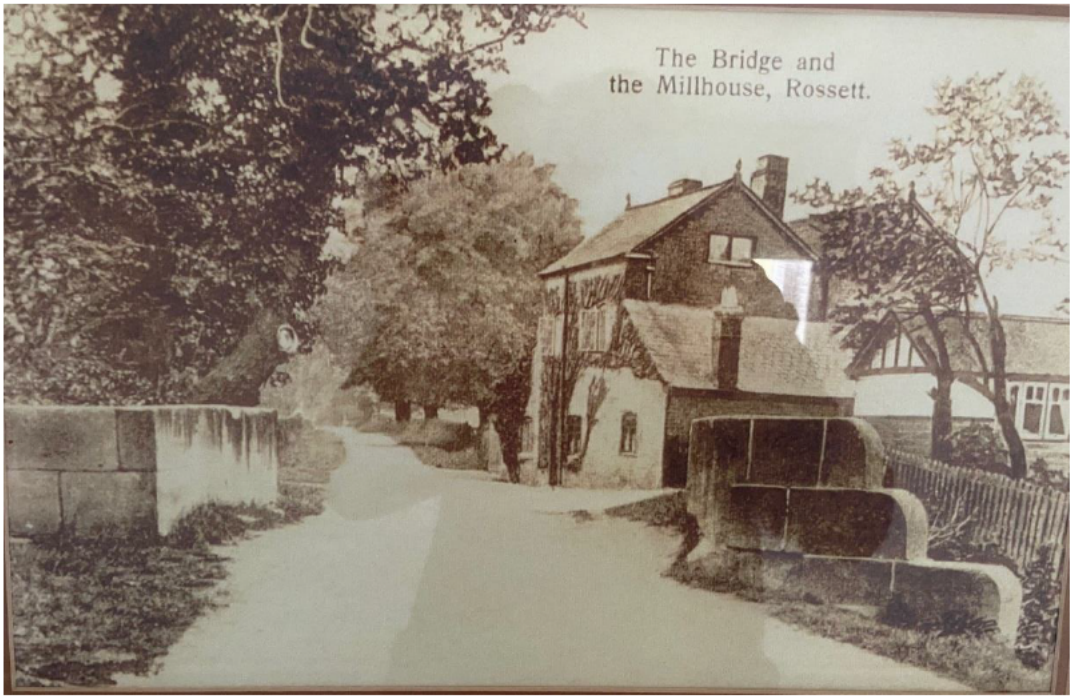
To achieve the above objectives whilst also avoiding of any material adverse effect on floodplain storage or conveyance.

Background



The Mill House lies relatively close to the two mills in Rossett, namely Marford Mill and Rossett Mill, which are situated straddling the adjacent B4554 Chester Road, to the west of Mill House on Manor Lane. The Mill race to the two mills rejoin at the rear of The Mill House and pass beneath the flat bridge in Manor Lane, rejoining shortly, the main Alyn River travelling east, at this point.

A building resembling, at least in part, the form of the present house, appears in a photograph taken from Manor Lane in the early twentieth century, whilst the stylised rear elevation of the house – see following image – reflects a simplistic reference to the Trevalyn Hall - which can be seen directly from the rear of Mill House and to which both the mills and the Mill House, are likely to have owed allegiance of ownership at some point.



Conservation Officer Dan Jones quotes and makes reference to more detailed historical material in his response to our initial replacement dwelling scheme. Subsequently, the applicant has responded to these issues by focusing on a less radical scheme involving modifications to the existing dwelling rather than its complete removal and reconstruction. The further design changes negotiated with the local planning authority then received the more positive responses referred to in the emails of 24 July 2026 and 21 Sept 2026 (see Appendix).

Whilst the Mill House is unlisted and excluded from the Rossett conservation area boundary, the attached application includes this Design and Access Statement in consideration of the proximity of Mill House and the relevance of maintaining the contribution that it makes to the group of mill buildings, amongst others.

The building appears to exhibit characteristics and design orientation common to other modified estate buildings within the Trevalyn Hall estate and, as such, the maintenance of a formal relationship with the hall (across the intervening field) is an objective of the proposals of this application.

That objective needs to be set alongside the reasonable aspiration of the new owner of Mill House to bring the design of the dwelling up to a standard of amenity that reflects the expectations of normal family occupation in the twenty-first century and as promoted by the Welsh Government and Wrexham Council, in respect of flood resistance.

Design

The history of the site has demonstrated that the configuration of the Alyn River and the topography of the land adjacent to the Rossett settlement, has historically produced recurrent flooding in the area of the Mill House. The vulnerability of the house, at present, lies largely in the unusually low height of the ground floor accommodation, relative to the road, whereby comparatively modest external flood depths in the surrounding area are likely to compromise the ground floor accommodation of the house leading to significant damage to the fittings, furnishings and services of the building. The vulnerability is increased by the demonstrable porosity of the lower brick walls of the house which have repeatedly been unable to resist floodwater ingress leading to the need for significant repairs and significant costs.

As part of the proposed works, the finished ground floor level will be raised to the maximum level reasonably achievable within the constraints of the existing building. The proposed level has been determined having regard to the existing ceiling heights, window and door openings and the relationship with the retained structure. From a flooding point of view, this represents a substantial material improvement over the existing situation and, together with the proposed flood-resilient construction measures, seeks to reduce the consequences of future flooding as far as reasonably practicable whilst retaining the existing structural building envelope.

The existing house was built hard against the road but set at a slight angle to it so that it has not been practical to create a formal elevation facing the road as the plan form steps back from the line of the highway at an angle. The entrance on the roadside at present, if replicated within the amended scheme, would require substantial steps or ramping to reach a modified, higher ground floor level. For this reason, the amended scheme for the Mill House building has eliminated the present roadside door in favour of a rear formal entry, facing the garden where levels of ground and general special requirements can be manipulated to create an entry to a higher floor level.



Existing SW Elevation



Proposed SW Elevation

The present first floor level will also inevitably be raised within the building envelope in order to create adequate and proportionate ceiling heights in the ground floor rooms below. This, in turn, is reflected in the elimination of the present separate second floor accommodation, within part of the roof space, which will now be absorbed into a loftier first floor accommodation. The resultant loss of floor area is to be partially compensated by the addition of an additional first floor bedroom suite on the southeast side of the building, above the present single storey element. The first floor extension is wholly above the existing single storey footprint and does not increase the established ground floor footprint of the dwelling.

The result of these changes inevitably generates the need to raise many of the window openings in the building's walls, most particularly in the formal Trevalyn Hall and rear garden facing southwest elevation. The detailed design of this elevation is considered to be the most important aspect of the application works as they affect appearance. This has resulted in a sequence of scheme design sketches and drafts exchanged between the applicant's design team and the Council's case officer and conservation officer under the Pre-Application Enquiry process, reference ENQ/25/0192, triggered initially in 2025. This has seen some evolution in the particular design of the amended elevation to the building. The fundamental principle agreed by all parties being that the central elements of the elevation should retain a strong formal symmetry around the main central garden side doorway. The proposals now submitted respect that objective and have moved substantially from the initial designs provided by the applicant's team. In the further comments conveyed by the Council on 21 September 2026, the Conservation Officer welcomed the more restrained approach to the garden facing elevation, retaining the historic detailing and overall proportions (see Appendix).

Additionally, a substantial number of the existing details found in the building's elevations have been retained but reinforced within the formal application package submitted to Wrexham County Borough Council. These include the retention of typical window surrounds found in the present elevation, gable dentil brickwork detailing, ornate cast iron hoppers and rainwater goods, existing pedestrian and side entry gates and, of course, Welsh slate roofing.



The retention and adaptation of the existing dwelling also avoids the wholesale loss of existing building fabric associated with demolition and rebuilding. The works provide the opportunity to improve thermal performance in a manner compatible with the character of the house and to reduce the repeated stripping-out and reconstruction that can follow flooding. These considerations support the sustainability objectives of the proposals.

Flooding Issues

The application relates to alterations to the existing doors and windows of The Mill House, principally raising the existing external openings by approximately 700 mm, specifically to improve the flood resilience of the existing dwelling.

The proposal does not involve the construction of a new dwelling, an extension of the existing building footprint, a change of use or an increase in residential accommodation or occupancy. The established residential use, footprint and physical extent of The Mill House therefore remain unchanged.

The proposals have been considered against Technical Advice Note 15: Development, Flooding and Coastal Erosion (TAN 15).

Paragraph 15.6 specifically addresses householder development and establishes a proportionate approach to minor works. It identifies the need for a Flood Consequences Assessment where minor works are likely to have an adverse effect, and the consequences therefore require appraisal.

For the reasons set out below, that circumstance is not considered to arise in this application.

The proposal introduces no additional ground floor development footprint into the floodplain. Whilst an additional bedroom is created towards the southern end of the first-floor accommodation, the raising of the first-floor level itself leads to the elimination of all the existing second floor accommodation within the raised roof structure with the first floor extension partially compensating for the resultant loss of floor area. Accordingly, the application does not increase the ground floor footprint or create an additional dwelling and is not intended to materially intensify its residential use. Equally, there is no question of introducing a more vulnerable land use. The physical extent and established residential use of The Mill House is not increased.

The works are generally confined to modifying the openings within the existing building envelope in order to increase the height at which floodwater would have to rise before entering the dwelling.

Importantly, this is precisely the type of property-level flood resistance and resilience encouraged by Section 13 of TAN 15. The purpose of the works is not to alter the wider floodplain or provide a strategic flood defence, but to reduce the consequences of a flood event upon an existing property.

The raising of the openings does not create a new obstruction within the floodplain or extend the established ground floor footprint of the building. Any reduction in floodwater entering the dwelling arises from improving the resistance of the existing building envelope rather than the occupation of additional open floodplain by built development.

It would therefore be inappropriate to treat the proposed resilience works in the same manner as new development which occupies additional floodplain or materially alters flood conveyance.

In consideration of appropriate responses to flooding matters and the principles of proportionality, an FCA is used to establish the consequences of development into an area at risk of flooding and to demonstrate that the development can be undertaken without unacceptable consequences to the development itself or elsewhere.

In this instance, the dwelling and its residential use are already established. The application neither increases the established ground floor footprint and Is not intended to increase the vulnerability or intensity of that use.

The proposal reduces the vulnerability of the existing dwelling by raising known points of potential floodwater ingress. It therefore represents an improvement to the existing flood-risk situation rather than the creation of a new flood-risk consequence.

Requiring a full FCA for these limited alterations would consequently be disproportionate to the nature and scale of the proposal and would not provide information necessary to determine the planning consequences of the works.

The application is a property-level flood resilience scheme to an existing dwelling.

There is:

- no increase in building footprint;
- no new dwelling or additional residential accommodation;
- no change or intensification of use;
- no separate flood wall, embankment or strategic flood-defence structure across open floodplain; and
- no alteration to the established ground floor extent of the building within the floodplain.

The works instead raise existing vulnerable openings by approximately 700 mm to reduce the consequences of flooding to the existing property, directly supporting the property-level flood resilience principles contained within TAN 15.

Having regard to the specific provisions for householder development in paragraph 15.6, together with the flood-resilience principles of Section 13 of TAN 15, a separate Flood Consequences Assessment is not considered necessary or proportionate for the determination of this application.

The proposal should instead be recognised as a positive and proportionate adaptation of an existing dwelling to an established flood risk, consistent with the objective of improving the resilience of existing properties and communities to future flooding.

Access

The unusually low ground floor level of this house in relation to the typical ground levels around it, not only generate issues for the residents in relation to flood vulnerability but also creates restrictions for less able visitors who may find the entry steps, particularly at the roadside access, to be limiting. Accordingly, the restricted roadside entry is eliminated in the amended proposals for the scheme and provision is to be made at the northern or western door entries.

Summary

This is an unusual and quite complicated proposal which involves several planning issues that have needed to be brought together in this application. The applicant has explored more radical options for the site which are now set aside in favour of the current strategy to reduce the vulnerability of the existing dwelling to flooding through modification to the existing dwelling – respecting its part in the history of this part of Rossett and its surrounding landscape. We believe that the design refinements developed and defined in this application reflect a proactive and constructive relationship between the applicant and the officers of the Council enabling substantial improvements in the flood resistance and sustainability of the Mill House dwelling whilst maintaining its characteristic features and its place in the development of the local story of Rossett.

APPENDIX

From: Tyler Fox [redacted]
Sent: 24 July 2026 14:15
To: Andy Phillips [redacted]
Subject: ENQ/2025/0192

Good Afternoon Andy

Please find attached response from the conservation officer for your consideration.

''Thanks for sending this through.

It is encouraging to see the proposals have evolved towards retaining and adapting the existing building rather than demolishing it. The applicant has clearly taken on board the concerns raised in earlier advice, and from a conservation perspective this is a much more positive approach. As set out previously, whilst the building is undesignated, it does have a degree of local historic and architectural interest.

I appreciate the challenges posed by the site's flood risk and understand that significant intervention may be required to secure the building's long-term future. In principle, I have no objection to exploring measures such as raising floor levels and making associated alterations to improve resilience.

My main concern relates to the treatment of the principal garden elevation. In my earlier comments, I identified this as the most consciously designed part of the building, with its symmetry, sandstone detailing and central entrance composition contributing significantly to its architectural interest.

Whilst I accept that some external changes may be necessary, I am not convinced that the proposed alterations to the central bay, particularly the loss of the existing entrance treatment and introduction of a balcony, are wholly driven by the engineering requirements. In my view, these changes would erode the symmetry and character of what is arguably the building's most significant elevation.

That said, I see this as a positive step forward overall and I welcome the applicant and agent seeking further input as the proposals develop. I would simply encourage further thought as to whether the necessary flood resilience measures can be achieved whilst retaining more of the existing composition and detailing of the principal elevation.

Hope this helps, any questions then please let me know''

Kind Regards
Tyler Fox

Tyler Fox
Swyddog Rheoli Datblygu / Development Management Officer
Economi a Chynllunio / Economy and Planning

APPENDIX

From: Tyler Fox [redacted]
Sent: 21 September 2026 10:45
To: FSP Northern
Cc: Andy Phillips [redacted]
Subject: RE: ENQ/2025/0192 - The Mill House, Manor Lane, Rossett LL12 0HL

Good morning

Dan has provided the final comments on the design below

A further positive step, we welcome that our previous feedback has been taken on board and a more restrained approach to the garden facing elevation has been incorporated, retaining the historic detailing and overall proportions.

We look forward to receiving your planning application
Kind Regards
Tyler Fox

Tyler Fox
Swyddog Rheoli Datblygu / Development Management Officer
Economi a Chynllunio / Economy and Planning