

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Refurbishment
of
North Arms
Mills Lane
Wroxton



Prepared by

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DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

The proposals for this scheme will bring the dilapidated and currently closed North Arms in Wroxton back into use for the community of Wroxton.

Historical information, heritage impact and community historical interest are provided in other documents attached to this application.

PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT

The North Arms is a Grade 2 listed building set in the heart of the village of Wroxton. The premises have been a public house since 1850 when the building was first licensed. The premises traded until the last few years when the building declined and trade reduced with the changes in social habits, smoking legislation and the availability of cheaper alcohol at supermarkets.

The building is currently empty and has been closed for at least four years.

The building was previously owned by a property developer who had plans to convert the property into houses. This was heavily opposed by the village community. The village launched a scheme to buy the premises having first had the building declared an Asset of Community Value by Cherwell District Council.

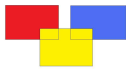
The village unfortunately could not raise the funds required so approached Wroxton College of Fairleigh Dickinson University initially to become a partner in the scheme but later to ask if they would purchase the site outright with a view to reopening the premises once again as licenced premises for the benefit of the village.

The College purchased the building in 2016 and since that time have been exploring options to refurbish and reopen the premises into a viable commercial operation that will be self sustaining. More recently the second public house in the village has closed leaving the village without a pub altogether.

This scheme is conceived to refurbish the main pub building back into a viable usage not only for community events but as a commercially viable pub/restaurant.

The proposals have been submitted to Cherwell District Council through the pre-application advice process twice prior to the submission of this application. Comments received during those site meetings and discussions have been accommodated into these proposals as far as practically possible.

The applicants have also consulted with representatives of Wroxton Parish Council and with all the neighbours living adjacent to the site prior to the submission of this application. All comments received have been incorporated into the proposals as far as practically possible.



THE EXISTING BUILDING

The site contains two buildings each of which are Grade 2 listed buildings.

The main building, which houses the licensed premises is part three and part two storeys in height constructed with natural stone walls under a pitched thatched roof.

The building is split into the licensed premises at ground floor with landlord living accommodation on the first and second floors. The ground floor space consisting of two bar and dining room areas with a small kitchen at one end of the building and male and female toilets at the opposite end of the building.

At first floor level there is a room above the kitchen which contained a large walk in cold room as well as the heating boiler.

The remainder of the first floor and the second floor were occupied by living accommodation for the landlord.

The second building on the site is the Stables or barn. This building is constructed with natural stone walls under a pitched corrugated metal or asbestos cement covered roof. The building has been used for storage in recent years with the main barn containing a vehicle inspection pit. This suggests this may have been used as a domestic garage with the other spaces used for general storage.

THE PROPOSED DESIGN

It is proposed to fully refurbish the main building retaining and expanding the dining facilities to the first floor and using the second floor as staff rooms. All the living accommodation will be removed. The ground floor will remain as a kitchen, bar dining facilities with new toilets facilities albeit the spaces will be reorganised to provide spaces that are of an appropriate size for their function.

The existing layout of the building is to be changed to accommodate a larger kitchen within Area E. This is achieved by stripping out the existing toilets and converting the space into the new kitchen. The toilets are contained within a 1960's extension. Within the kitchen the existing windows will be replaced, external door replaced, and the ceiling will be raised by adjusting the position of the ceiling joists. The interior of the kitchen will be fitted with modern commercial kitchen equipment with the walls lined with sheet finishes that are easy clean to ensure the kitchen can maintain easy clean hygienic surfaces.

Extract above the cooker and range positions will extend to a small new roof dormer. This will be set within the existing roof in the form of a small louvred timber dormer in both front and rear slopes of the roof. The second hood above the dishwasher area will be a condense hood only and not connect to any mechanical extraction system.

The existing bar will be refurbished with a new bar fitted with Area D.

The existing building fails to comply with any fire safety regulation for escape from the upper floors. The only staircase to the upper floors is located at the far and opposite end to the staircase between the first and second floor. It is necessary to install a new staircase to first floor. This has been positioned against the wall with the kitchen. The staircase has been positioned to avoid altering or interfering with any major structural beams.



The existing inglenook fireplace in the bar will be retained. A new stove will be fitted to the fireplace. The flue will be inspected and lined as necessary to comply with HEATAS regulations for stoves. The height of the stack has been raised previously.

New Amtico style vinyl strip flooring will be laid to the floor.

The second ground floor room will be refurbished to form a dining area, Area C. This area is suffering from dampness penetrating through the walls. The floor slab and quarry tile finish will be removed and replaced with a new limecrete slab. New flagstone paving will be laid, budget permitting. The walls will be stripped of the modern plaster and replaced with new lime putty plaster. The specification being selected to deal with the damp issues.

A section of plasterboard ceiling that has been installed previously will be opened up and the condition of the joists assessed. This section of the floor has been replaced in the past. Further repairs are required where the ceiling has been removed/collapsed following leaks from the first floor bathroom above.

Two new toilets will be created in the area occupied by the former kitchen, Area B. The building does not currently have any facilities for assisted WC or disabled persons. A new WC compartment compliant with disabled and assisted use will be formed. Unfortunately, due to the comments received during the pre-application advice consultations it is not possible to improve the internal access to this area from within the dining area. The ground floor levels change through the length of the building with the toilets set higher than the adjacent dining rooms. Creating internal access to the toilets required alterations that the pre application advice identified would not be supported by the Conservation Officer. Access therefore to the disabled WC will be via the external door only. Currently however the building does not have any facilities at all for disabled guests. The second smaller WC will be a unisex WC compartment.

FIRST FLOOR

The existing staircase to the first floor rises from within the old kitchen, Area B. The alterations to the building layout now mean this key means of escape staircase will no longer be within the kitchen but within a fire protected circulation area. The staircase will be altered to improve its layout so that the top landing is level with the first floor level. Currently there is a further step from the landing through a doorway to first floor level. This inherent trip and fall hazard has been removed. A new second stair flight will then lead up to the new toilet area, area F. The second staircase replaces a steep open riser ladder stair. Area F currently houses a large walk in cold room.

Due largely to the weight of the cold store the floor in this space is in poor condition. The heritage advice provided reports this floor would originally have been lower suggesting the structure is a 20th century alteration. The floor joists and structure will be removed and replaced with a new timber floor structure which will be level and be able to accommodate the staircase to the ground floor.

New toilet facilities will be constructed in this area. This will consist of separate male and female toilets. All drainage pipework will drop to the ground floor inside the building and connect to the new toilets on ground floor level formed below.



The main area of the first floor will be transformed into a new dining room, area G/H. All 20th century partitioning will be removed in this area. The original timber post and plaster partitioning will be retained.

The condition of the timber post and plaster partition will be carefully assessed. The plaster on the partition is in poor condition. Currently the plaster has a coating of woodchip paper on it. A sample area will be tested to see how feasible it is to remove the paper and repair the plaster.

The new staircase from the bar to the first floor dining area will extend up to a wide landing within Area I/J. Here the existing timber stud partitions will be modified to create a new central opening through to the dining areas behind. The retained sections of partitions will be formed into two cupboards. This requires minor modification to the partitioning whilst allowing the space to be opened up to form a through dining area.

The staircase to the second floor is an original timber flight. This now requires repair to stabilise the treads. This will be completed from the underside by using plywood under each tread. This ensures the original timber plank treads can be strengthened without any need to alter or interfere with the existing timber. The soffit of the staircase is currently open and exposed. In the past has been lined with plasterboard, now removed. It is important to ensure the staircase is protected against fire. This will be achieved by sealing shut the understair cupboard. The original door and ironmongery will be retained. This avoids having to line the underside of the staircase again with plasterboard.

The door to the staircase lobby from Area I/J will also be sealed closed. All ironmongery will be retained. Sealing both doors is a reversible piece of work and one which retains the heritage fabric of the building whilst achieving compliance with fire safety.

The new handrail and balusters of the staircase to the ground floor will be formed in timber with clear glazed infill panels as balustrade. The opaque nature of the glazed panels ensures the staircase does not dominate the space or overshadow the heritage aspects of the building which have been carefully retained.

A fireplace within the gable wall will be sealed over with boarding. The modern slate hearth will be removed.

SECOND FLOOR, AREA L/M

The second floor area is to be used for staff facilities only. This includes forming a small managers office, a staff room, staff toilet and small plant room to house the heating boiler.

Alterations at second floor level are minimal. The existing enclosure to the staircase, Area K, will be retained along with the unusual door and porthole viewing panel in the door. These areas will be redecorated.

The second floor structure is in poor condition with a significant bow in the centre of the floor caused by the failure of the beam below in Area I/J. The beam will be repaired. The second floor will be levelled by fixing battens to the existing floorboards and providing a new floor boarding. All existing parts of the structure including the floorboards will be retained.

New partitioning for the office and rest room will be stud walling finished with plasterboard. This is reversible if necessary, in the future without harming the original structure.



The new plant room will require a new gas flue to be installed. The intention is to break into the existing chimney flue that is no longer in use and to enclose the new gas flue within the existing chimney flue.

Drainage from the staff wc will be run down within the second chimney flue to reach ground floor level. Here it will connect to the drainage from the kitchen. This avoids the need for any additional exposed soil pipes. The staff wc will however require extract ventilation, it being an internal room. This will be achieved by core drilling into the gable wall and attaching the extract to an air brick set within the existing wall. The air brick can be colour washed with line wash to match the colour stone of the wall.

MAIN BUILDING ELEVATIONS

No significant alterations are proposed to the elevations of the main building.

The principles of the scheme are repair and refurbishment.

Front elevation (Road)

Repairs are required to the elevations of the building. It is proposed to repair the cast iron guttering and downpipes, replace the old Crital windows to the former toilets, repair and redecorate the existing timber windows and shutters, each will be subject to detailed survey to identify the specific repairs to each frame. All putties will be replaced where these have deteriorated.

The small porch canopy to the elevation will be repaired with the slates being removed and refixed and the timber frame being decorated.

The existing double timber doors to this elevation are to be opened up and brought back into use as a fire exit. The existing doors and frames will be retained and redecorated. All existing ironmongery will be retained. No additional ironmongery will be added to the exterior of the doors.

The chimneys will be inspected, the existing pots will be bedded if necessary, the mortar fillets to each chimney will be replaced when the roof covering is repaired. The redundant chimney flues will be capped with ventilated pots depending upon the existing circumstances when each is inspected.

Gable elevation

Minimal repair is required to this elevation.

The existing timber screen at first floor level will be repaired and redecorated.

The old kitchen extract louvre will be removed, and the large opening filled in with salvaged stone to match the existing stone.

The existing window frame will be repaired, new putties used for the glazing and the frames redecorated.



Rear Elevation Garden

All windows will be repaired to the main building with new windows proposed to the new kitchen. External doors and door frames will be repaired however the modern timber door to the former toilets will be replaced. The door and frame to the new toilets will also be replaced to ensure the door is wide enough to allow a disabled person to enter the building to use the toilet. The existing door is not wide enough.

The existing LPG pipework from the old kitchen run on the outside of the building. All existing pvc drainage soil pipe and waste pipes on the elevation will also be removed. This is no longer required and inappropriate for the elevations of this property.

The timber trough gutter that is fixed to the eaves of the roof will be repaired, refixed and redecorated.

The existing tarmac surface that is against the stone of the wall is partly responsible for the dampness being experienced in the new dining room. It is proposed to cut back the tarmac and create a shingle filled french drain. This will reduce water pressure against the wall and assist in alleviating the dampness.

Roof

The existing thatch has reached the point of requiring repair and replacement. Advice was taken some time ago from a local specialist thatcher. In 2013 it was recommended that one side of the roof was stripped back to a sound base and re-laid with new Combined Wheat Straw. Since that time the roof has deteriorated further, and we are proposing to strip back the whole of the thatch back to a firm base and then to build up the layer to minimum 350mm thickness. A copy of the recommendation from Parkinson Blackwell is attached. We have removed cost information as this is not relevant.

Exterior and Grounds

A new timber shelter will be constructed at the edge of the car park area. This will be a new smoking shelter. The structure will be clad with timber and have paving flags laid as a solid base.

A new underground LPG tank will be provided. This will follow all relevant gas safety regulations. The only parts of the installation which will be visible above ground will be the fill point and controls.



STABLES /BARN

It is proposed to convert the existing stable/barn to create a new private dining room, preparation kitchen and to house a walk in package cold store within an old garage space.

The main stable area will be refurbished and repaired. This includes replacing the existing roof cladding with a new corrugated Corten steel cladding. This will be insulated to current standards with a plastered ceiling to the underside. The existing roof structure will be retained and strengthened where appropriate. This is expected to include new noggins for the fixing of the ceiling.

The roof trusses will be left exposed. The timber will be inspected and repaired if necessary.

The existing walls will be wire brushed and the previously decorated stone will be limewashed.

The floor of the stable will be taken up, the vehicle inspection pit removed and a new limecrete floor slab laid. This will be finished with flag stones.

The existing windows will be retained, repaired and redecorated.

The double entrance doors and frame will be replaced with a new timber doors and frames. These will be fixed open with a set of frameless glazed doors fixed as an inner door set. The glazed doors will be fitted with suitable manifestation.

The concrete lintel above the entrance will be removed along with the exposed steel beam. These will be replaced with a new timber lintel. Stone work above the opening will be repaired and repointed where disturbed by the installation of the new lintel.

The high level timber hatch door will be taken down, assess and repaired and refixed.

The existing timber nest box covers will be repaired as necessary.

Externally the existing upvc guttering will be removed and replaced with new cast iron gutter and downpipes.

Inside the stable the room will be fitted with heating, small power and feature lighting.

The new preparation kitchen will be fitted out with metal stud wall linings finished with Altro white rock wall lining boards. This will create an easy clean surface for the food preparation area.

The floor slab will be replaced, and new sheet vinyl flooring will be laid again for hygiene purposes.

The external door and frame will be replaced to the existing opening.

The kitchen will be fitted with heating, water services, drainage and fire detection systems.



A new walk in modular cold store will be in the end garage space. This will be a stand alone unit installed into the existing garage space. New timber doors and frame will be provided to the space for security and to screen the cold store unit.



ACCESSIBILITY

The existing building is set on many levels with currently no facilities for anyone other than a fully abled customer. Little can be done due to the Listed status of the building to level the floor levels however new facilities to improve the accessibility of the building have been included into the scheme.

All facilities within the building will be accessible to an ambulant disabled person. The new staircase to first floor will be compliant with Building Regulations Part M.

Current access into the building is via a level threshold doorway. This provides access into the bar and into the ground floor dining area. Access between the bar and dining room is level and flat.

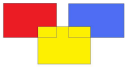
A new disabled WC cubicle will be constructed to one end of the building. Unfortunately, it is not possible to create internal access between the bar and toilet. This was proposed in an early scheme design, but comments received during the pre-application process has meant the new ambulant stairs between the dining room and toilet would not be supported by the Conservation Officer.

Access to the new disabled toilet cubicle will be from the exterior of the building. The door and frame into the new toilet lobby is to be replaced within the existing opening to ensure it is wide enough to comply.

The new disabled wc will be compliant with Part M of the Building Regulations.

The stables will be fully accessible with level threshold at the entrance.

Due to the restrictions of listed building status there is no opportunity to provide fully accessible first floor to the building.



APPENDIX A

PARKINSON BLACKWELL

MASTER THATCHERS

Mr. J. Martindale
Kinwell House
Shennington
Oxfordshire
OX15 6NC
14th February 2013

Ref: Thatching work at The North Arms, Wroxton, Oxfordshire.

Elevations: All elevations.

Dear Mr. Martindale,
After inspecting the thatched roof at the above address, a quotation for the complete re-thatching work is as follows.

THATCHING QUOTATION AND SPECIFICATIONS

Supply and maintain all necessary scaffolding.

Strip off the eave, gables and any thatch to establish a firm base on all elevations and dispose of all waste.

Replace all eave timber and gable timber as necessary.

Re-thatch all elevations in combed wheat reed to a minimum thickness of 350mm. fixing to the base coat with hazel spars.

Finish both elevations with an ornamental, turnover, block ridge in combed wheat reed, fixed with spars and hazel pattern work.

Wire net the complete roof with 19mm. 22 gauge wire netting fixed with galvanised wire pegs.

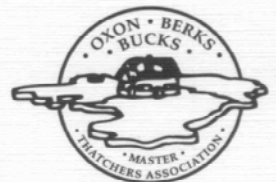
Finish the chimney's with a sand/cement/lime fillet.

Clear the site of all rubbish.

Supply all labour and materials.

TOTAL COST: [REDACTED]

All prices exclude V.A.T.



PARKINSON BLACKWELL

MASTER THATCHERS

Parkinson Blackwell are a multi award winning thatching company and are members of both the National and the Regional Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Buckinghamshire Master Thatcher's Association. Ian Parkinson is the long standing elected secretary of the regional association.

We carry public liability and employer's liability through NFU. We have the correct waste transfer licence and all waste is transferred to a green recycling depot.

Please contact me if you would like to see similar properties to your own that we have undertaken, or to arrange a site visit to see our work in progress.

Please feel free to contact any or all of the referees as follows:

Mr. Nicholas Johnson.
The Estate Office.
The Great Tew Estate.
Great Tew,
Chipping Norton.
Oxfordshire.

Mr. J. Smith
The Wroxton Hotel
Wroxton
Banbury
Oxfordshire

Mr. R. Graham
Nicholsons Nurseries
The Park
North Aston
Oxfordshire

Reference from Professor Edward Fiddy.

Dear Jonathan and Spike,

I enclose a cheque for the third and final payment and I independently made the sum exactly what you did!
It is rare to find craftsmen who turn up when they say they will, finish when they say they will and work so closely with the client to produce an end result that provides such a finicky person such as myself such complete satisfaction.

I must therefore thank you for such a stress free job that has given such pleasure to me, my neighbours and many passing viewers.

I must also add that you have a great team, entertaining, polite, good humoured in all weathers, hard working with such skill.

I am very grateful to you all.

Best Wishes

Professor Edward Fiddy
Well Cottage
Ledwell
Oxfordshire

www.masterthatcher.com

Grove Ash Farm, Iron Down Hill, Deddington Road, Great Tew, Chipping Norton OX7 4DH Tel: 01608 683730
The Deans, Moor Lane, South Newington, Banbury, Oxfordshire OX15 4JQ Tel: 01295 722455



SPECIFICATIONS FOR WHEAT REED THATCHING

QUALITY OF MATERIALS.

1. Providing the length of the straw does not fall below 27" it is still suitable for combing, although the ideal length is 36".
2. The straw shall be suitable if, on passing through the reed comb the grain and leaf are removed and the butt ends are in one direction. No straw shall travel through the drum
3. The variety shall be recognised as suitable. If a new variety, it will normally be hollow stemmed, winter-grown wheat, although rye straw and triticale is recognised.
4. Where fertiliser is employed the nitrogen level shall be kept as low as possible and less than 70 units per acre.
5. The straw shall not be discoloured; it should be strong, supple and resist efforts to break it by twisting a handful continuously.

GROUND WORK AND PREPARATION.

1. Stacks on site shall be covered to protect against adverse weather conditions.
2. Wheat reed bundles shall be butted and exposed ends cleaned and trimmed. The bundles may be lightly dampened and allowed to steep prior to use.

NEW WORK.

1. Old wire and thatch to be removed.
2. The roof frame shall comply with the specifications for thatch.

FIXINGS.

1. The reed is to be secured by adequate fixing to ensure that there is no slippage.
2. Every course of reed should be fixed to every rafter.
3. The dimensions of the sway should be sufficient to ensure that there is no bowing between rafters.
4. The depth of the materials over the fixing will be a minimum of 6".

CASE WORK.

1. The reed shall have a compact finish and an even density.
2. The surface of the reed will conform to the pitch of the rafters, which will not normally be less than 45 degrees.
3. The minimum depth over the batten or substrate of the thatch shall not be less than 12".
4. Face work thickness will be maintained through all features, valleys will be rounded.
5. Barges/gables shall be angled in towards bargeboards.
6. All junctions of the ridge with reed casework e.g. gable windows shall be adequately weathered by a formed saddle.
7. Soil pipes etc. piercing the casework shall be weathered with a flashing, sufficient in length to reach the sway fixing.
8. The box gutters to chimneys will be of sufficient size to prevent the accumulation of debris.

