

Design and Access Statement

Dairy Farm House, Church Street, Higham, ME3 7LD

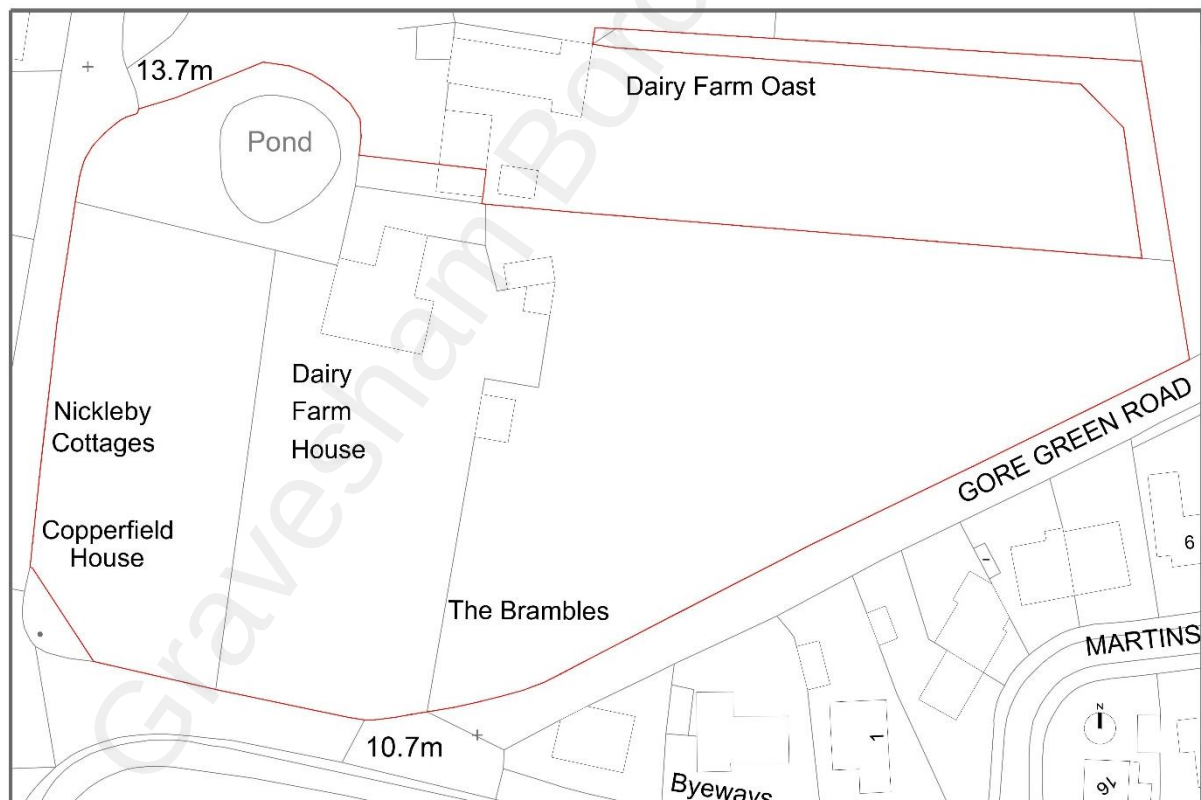
RDA ref. 3043/2.0/KNL

24th June 2022

Overview:

The application site is located in the village of Higham just north of the A289. The overall character of the surrounding area is that of a mixture of double storey detached dwellings, cottages and light industrial service buildings. There is no uniformity in terms of dwelling boundaries or with the spacing between dwellings. The site is accessed from Lower Rochester Road off the A289.

The application site is a Grade II listed building and sits within Lower Higham conservation area.



Location Plan (not to scale)

For scale drawing see:

3043 (02) 1250



Relevant Planning Policies:

The following planning policies according to the 2014 Gravesham Local Plan have been taken into account:

- Policy CS14: Housing Type and Size
- Policy CS15: Housing Density
- Policy CS19: Development and Design Principles
- Policy CS20: Heritage and the Historic Environment

The principal issues in the consideration of this application are the design, character and appearance of the proposed alterations, and the visible and material impact upon the Grade 2 listed status.

Design, Character and Appearance:

The application site is well within the established area of Higham, located within a moderately built-up residential area comprising of houses of varying styles and material choices. The design, with its internal alterations has sought to be in-keeping with the dwelling's characteristics, ensuring that any changes are minimal and respectful of the original structure and fabric. With no changes to the external of the dwelling (other than replacing the existing diagonal drainage pipe with a 4"/110mm vertical soil pipe to the west elevation) the scheme will have no impact on the street scene.

Design Principles:

At present the current bathroom provision is deemed to be inadequate for a family. The interior alterations seek to provide an ensuite bathroom accessed off of bedroom 3 by effectively adapting the current walk-in wardrobe space (refer to drawing 3016 C1).

At present there is a sink within the bedroom (somewhat of an unsatisfactory bed-sit arrangement) with existing hot and cold-water feeds as well as a single waste pipe that clumsily traverses the west elevation (see elevation drawing #3043 (02) 004). The latter would become redundant, being replaced by an external black soil pipe. Internally, waste pipes (for the shower and toilet) can be neatly concealed within an existing subfloor void, access to which can be fortuitously achieved through the void above the built-in cupboard within the corner of the ground floor study (i.e., the walk-in cupboard to Bedroom 3 is located within a niche directly above this to the west side of the chimney stack.)

In addition, two large dormer attic rooms (labelled as Bedroom 5 and Study on the 2nd floor plan), have spacious 'loft' storage rooms to the north. Of these, one (to the NE) is accessed directly off the study (bypassing the chimney stack) whilst the other (to the NW) is accessed solely from a steep 'servants' stair that rises directly, via two kite-winder platforms, from ground floor to the loft.

As this upper floor is more than 4.5m from ground level, adequate fire escape is a consideration otherwise occupation of these spaces would be limited to non-sleeping accommodation. There is currently no acceptable alternative means of escape from these two rooms. The situation is more critical as the existing internal panelled doors throughout the house, are not fire-rated and provide little or no protection.

A practical solution would be to utilise (to in effect 'repurpose') the existing servant's stair as it could be accessed off Bedroom 5 and provide an alternative direct route to the ground floor, exiting into a zone separated from the central hallway, off of which the principal stair is accessed (i.e., it discharges into an alternative space in terms of fire strategy and 'means of escape').

To achieve this would require removal of a section of lath & plaster wall between the bedroom and head of the stair so that in effect there are 2 doors at the top (opposite each other) rather than just the one serving the rear store. Forming this doorway would require little structural alteration. It is a clear necessity which could and should be read as part of the evolution of the building's use through time.

Building Control would no doubt require the new door from Bedroom 5 to be 30-minute fire rated and smoke sealed. This would arguably be applied to the other 3 doors off the stairwell (one at each level including at the bottom of the stair. We would also need to agree a waiver with the authority in regard to headroom and access on to a winder platform – all of which is preferable to no access at all.

This arrangement is indicated on drawing #3044 (20)002

Impact on Neighbouring Amenities:

There is no loss of amenity arising from the scheme as the proposed alterations occur well within the application site boundary. With the main changes being internally, there will not be an overbearing effect; neither will it lead to overlooking onto the neighbours and nearby properties.

Parking and Access:

The size of the plot allows for plenty of parking spaces for the residents. At present there is a timber frame carport which allows space for 2 cars as well as a driveway space outside the front of the property.

Relevant Planning Applications:

No relevant Planning Applications have been submitted in the local area that are deemed pertinent.

Conclusion:

It is our view that this application be supported and Listed Building Consent for the proposed development granted as:

- Notwithstanding the antiquity of the property, the minor alterations put forward serve to provide facilities and a level of safety expectant of a 21st century dwelling
- It is in accordance with the local planning policies
- The design, character and appearance are in-keeping with the local area
- No loss of amenity, privacy or trees

Submission:

The following drawings indicated below will be submitted with the Planning Application, along with this Design and Access Statement:

Drawings:

- 3043 (02) 001 – Existing Ground Floor Plan
- 3043 (02) 002 – Existing First Floor Plan
- 3043 (02) 003 – Existing Second Floor Plan
- 3043 (02) 004 – Existing West Elevation
- 3043 (02) 005 – Existing Ground and First Floor Plans 1:50
- 3043 (02) 1250 – Existing Site and Block Plan

- 3043 (20) 001 – Proposed Ground and First Floor Plans 1:50
- 3043 (20) 002 – Proposed Second Floor Plan 1:50
- 3043 (20) 003 – Proposed West Elevation
- 3043 (20) 1250 – Proposed Site and Block Plan

Other:

- 3043 C1 – First Floor Bedroom 3 Context
- 3043 C2 – Second Floor Storage Room Context
- 3043 C3 – West Elevation Site Context

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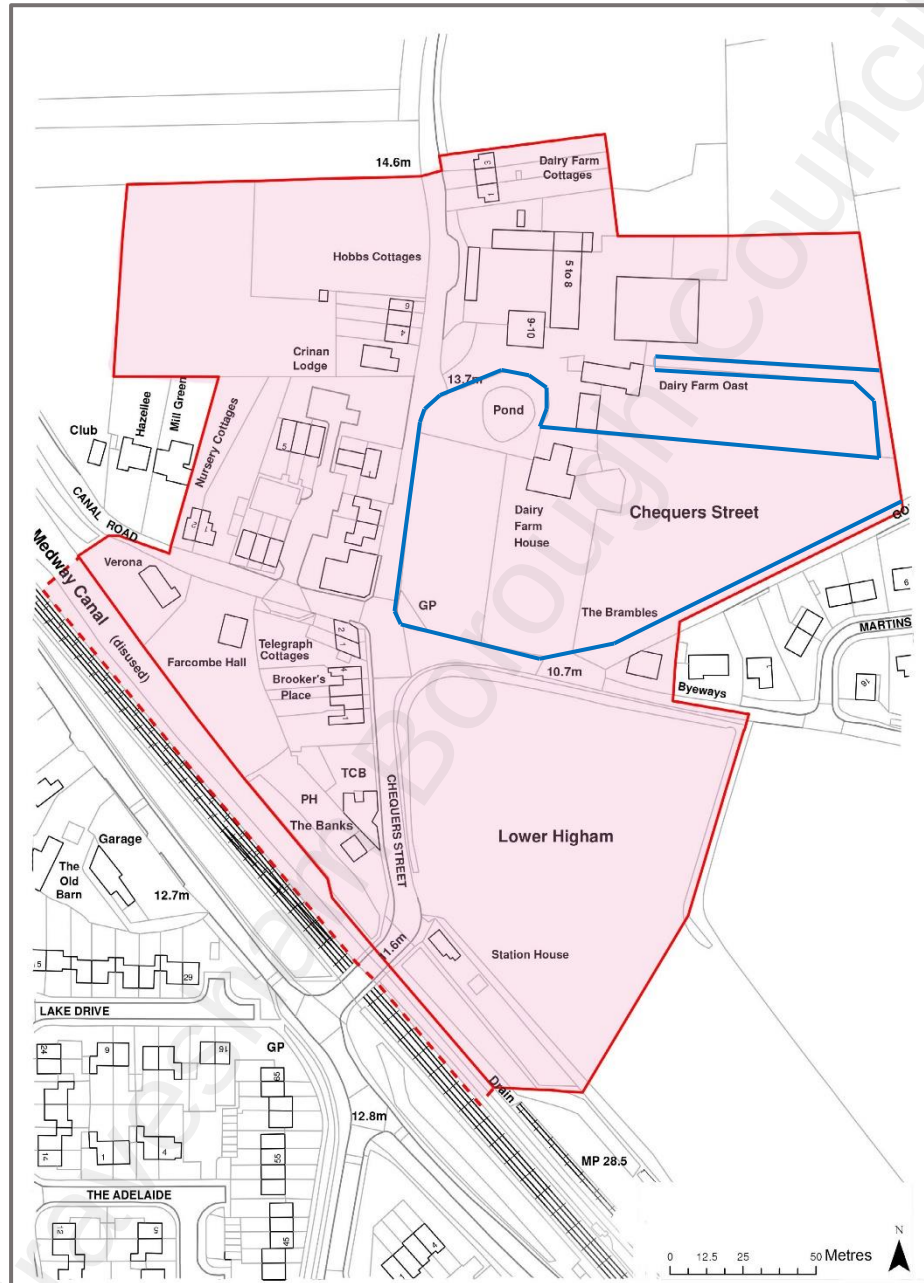
Co. Reg. England & Wales
OC359059

Heritage Statement

Dairy Farm House, Church Street, Higham, ME3 7LD

RDA ref. 3043/2.0/KNL

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Conservation area boundary with application site location indicated by blue line.

The historic core of Lower Higham is a very small settlement formed around a rural crossroads in largely open countryside. It is some four and a half miles east of Gravesend, a mile north of the larger, modern, village of Higham and some two miles south of the shore of the Thames.

Lower Higham Conservation Area was designated on 29th September 2008. The conservation area's boundary contains the historic street of Chequers Street, and parts of Church Street, Canal Road and Lower Rochester Road.

Relationship of the conservation area to its surroundings:

The immediate surroundings of the conservation area vary in character from suburban to open country. To the south west, and strictly separated off by the railway/canal cutting, is the modern suburban development of the later part of Lower Higham. To the south east there are wide open vistas across rising ground in arable cultivation. To the east is another suburban development around Martin's Close, only partly screened from the village by planting and hedges. North east and north beyond Dairy Farm the rising ground is mostly in arable and orchard use. North-west beyond the village confines lies the marsh, screened from the village by a slight rise in the ground and enclosing tree belts, hedges etc.

Dairy Farm House

Historic England Listing:

Heritage Category: Listed Building

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1381167

Date first listed: 28-Jul-2000

Statutory Address: Dairy Farm House, Church Street

County: Kent

District Authority: Gravesham

Parish: Higham

National Grid Reference: TQ 71522 72919

Details:

Listing NGR: TQ7152272919

Farmhouse. Late C17 or early C18, defenestrated in original openings and porch and small east extension added in late C19 or early C20.

Built of red brick in Flemish bond with steeply pitched hipped tiled roof with two end brick chimneystacks. Double fronted plan.

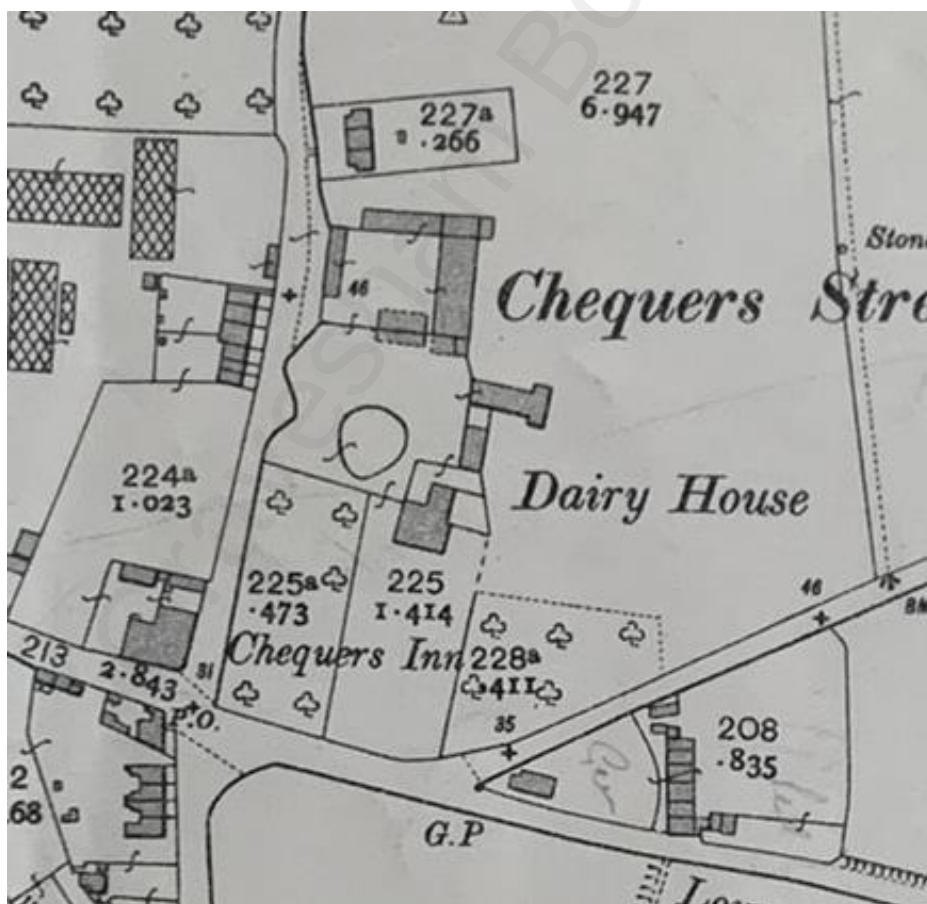
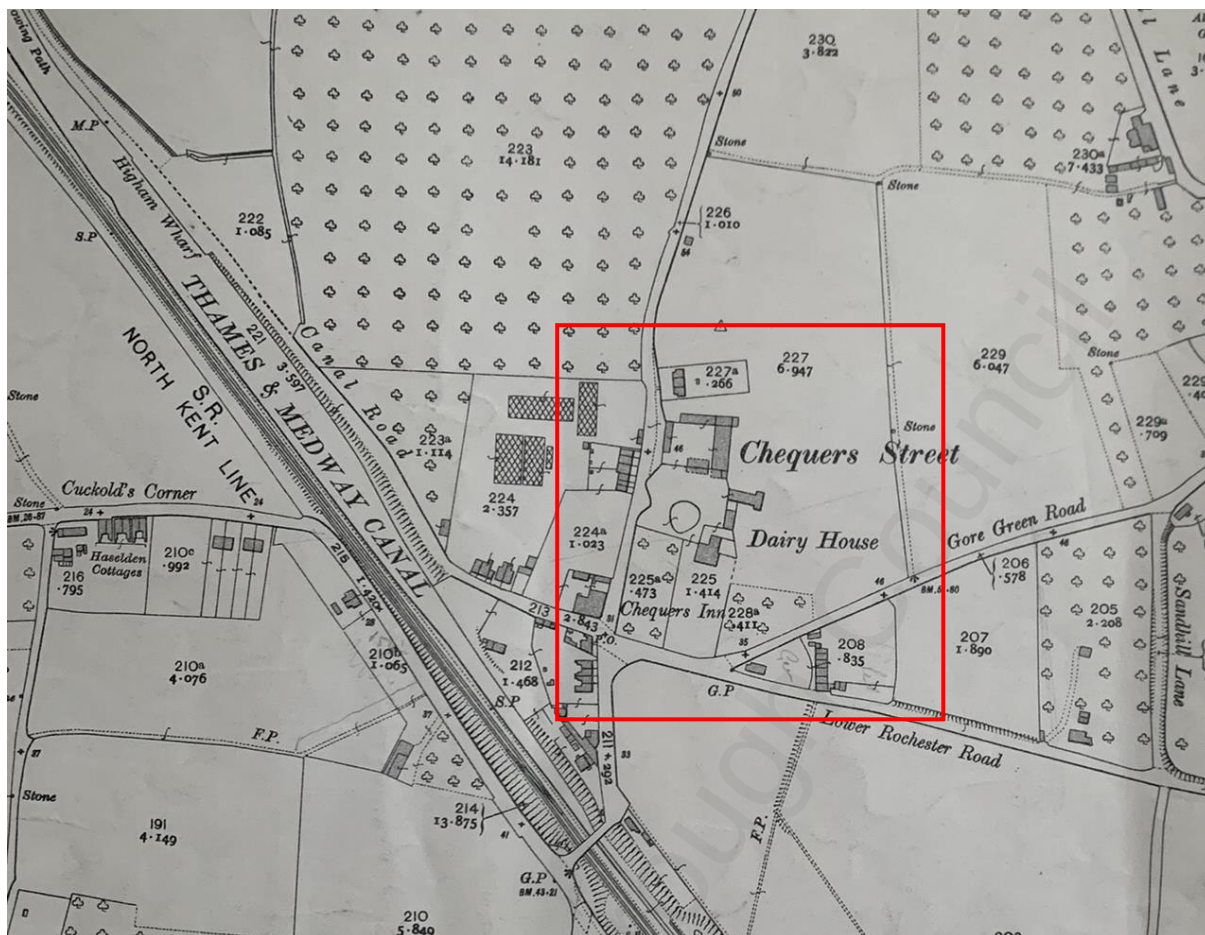
Two storeys and attics: 5 windows to original part, one storey one window to addition. Front elevation has moulded rubbed brick eaves course with half brick projecting full height piers at either end. Two tiled gabled dormers with rendered cheeks and 3 over 6 glazing bars with horns. Other floors have 6 over 6 sash windows with horns with rubbed brick voussoirs and rendered and painted cills.

Central single panelled raised and fielded front door with central entrance portico, square piers and moulded cornice, rendered and painted. East extension is single storied of brick with hipped tiled roof, 6 Over 6 glazing bar sash with horns to front and double sash without glazing bars but with horn to east side. Rear extensions housing domestic services.

INTERIOR: Window shutters to ground floor rooms. Three timber panelled rooms. Fireplaces to all rooms with two ground floor fireplaces have built in cupboards. Early panelled doors and joinery details and narrow service stairs from kitchen to upper floor. Bell system with wires leading to the kitchen survives.

Impact of Proposed alterations:

The proposed internal alterations, there reasoning and their impact on the Listed Building are fully described above under the D&A Statement on page 2.



Kent XI.9
Revised: 1931,
Published: 1933

