

Design & Access Statement

The Sun Northaw

Extension to the rear of The Sun, Public House, detailed to provide separation between historic fabric and new architecture; with a series of sympathetic internal alterations involving the loss of modern partitions

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clear.

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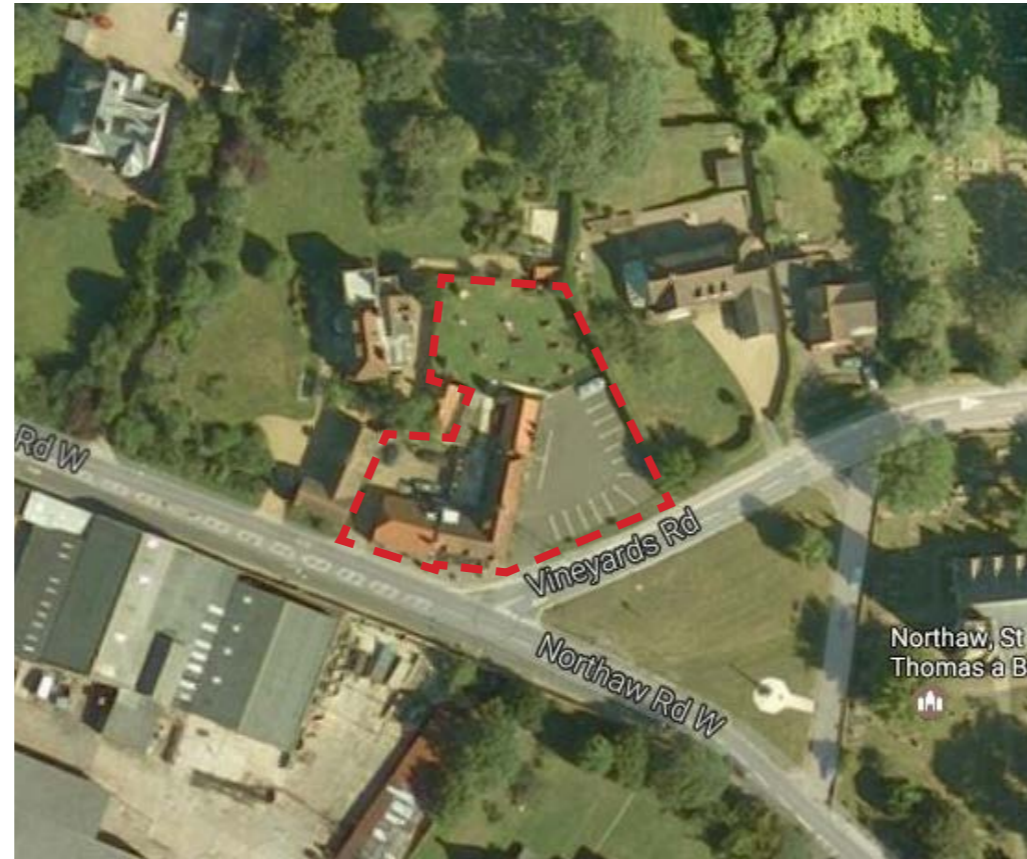
1. Introduction

Our clients have recently completed the purchase of The Sun Public House (PH) which is Grade II Listed. The PH has been subject to many alterations during its lifetime.

The PH closed in August 2016 following a series of works by its previous owner to establish The Sun as a PH/Restaurant. The business closed due to making a loss which was down to its layout and lack of table covers to provide sufficient income to operate the establishment.

The building currently has 30 table covers. In a separate Viability Report, financial information regarding the failed business will demonstrate that significant changes are required to enable the building to re-open as a PH/Restaurant.

The Sun is in a poor state of repair and it is clear that little money has been spent on sympathetic maintenance and improvement over the years. With 4 PHs closing a day (February 2017, www.thisismoney.co.uk) it is important from the outset that the applicant together with the Council's Conservation and Listed Building Officer and Senior Planning Officers agree a way forward to bring back to life this down trodden PH, making it once again a financially viable pillar of the community and a destination PH/Restaurant for all to enjoy.



Aerial photograph of site



Photograph of the rear of site

2. Property Listing & History

The PH is Grade II listed under listing number 1173908. According to Historic England's Website the listing description is as follows:

Public House. C17 timber framed inn in L shape, extended both ends in late C18 or early C19. Refronted c1900. Painted brick and roughcast. Steep pitched plain tile roof with terracotta ridge tiles. Flush sash windows. Front has 3 eaves gables over 1st floor windows and ground floor 4-window extension. Left hand extension is weatherboarded with broad roof, half hipped on W gable end. Interior with brick and timber frame partition. E elevation has C17 right hand block with 2 windows, plinth, floor band and hipped plain tile roof. Weatherboarded addition of early C19 on right end with a small-pane twin casement and pantile roof.

From the description, it clearly shows the building has undergone a story-board of change from its original appearance to the building we see before us. Some alteration such as the weatherboard extensions to the left and at the end of the L shaped section have been carried out sympathetically. As have the change in window styles from the original casement type to what are now sash windows. Such a change was likely to refresh the appearance of the building and continue it to appear inviting as a PH. Historically, The Sun has evolved as its business needs arose.

However, sections of the building are poor in features and aesthetically lessen the building's stance. These consist of, the front porch (approved in 1993 under reference S6/0531/93/FP) which is of poor design.

The front extension which has been completed for practicality with a felt roof. The large two storey L shaped element which projects rearward alongside the garden; is constructed from concrete blockwork which is visible through the render and not aesthetically pleasing from the courtyard side.

The PH has also been re-roofed in recent times. The roof is in good condition.

A full analysis of the building and its modernisation is fully examined in the separate Heritage Statement.

Planning Application S6/2012/1182/FP was approved for 16 ground mounted solar panels. These have not been installed.



Photograph of The Sun from car park

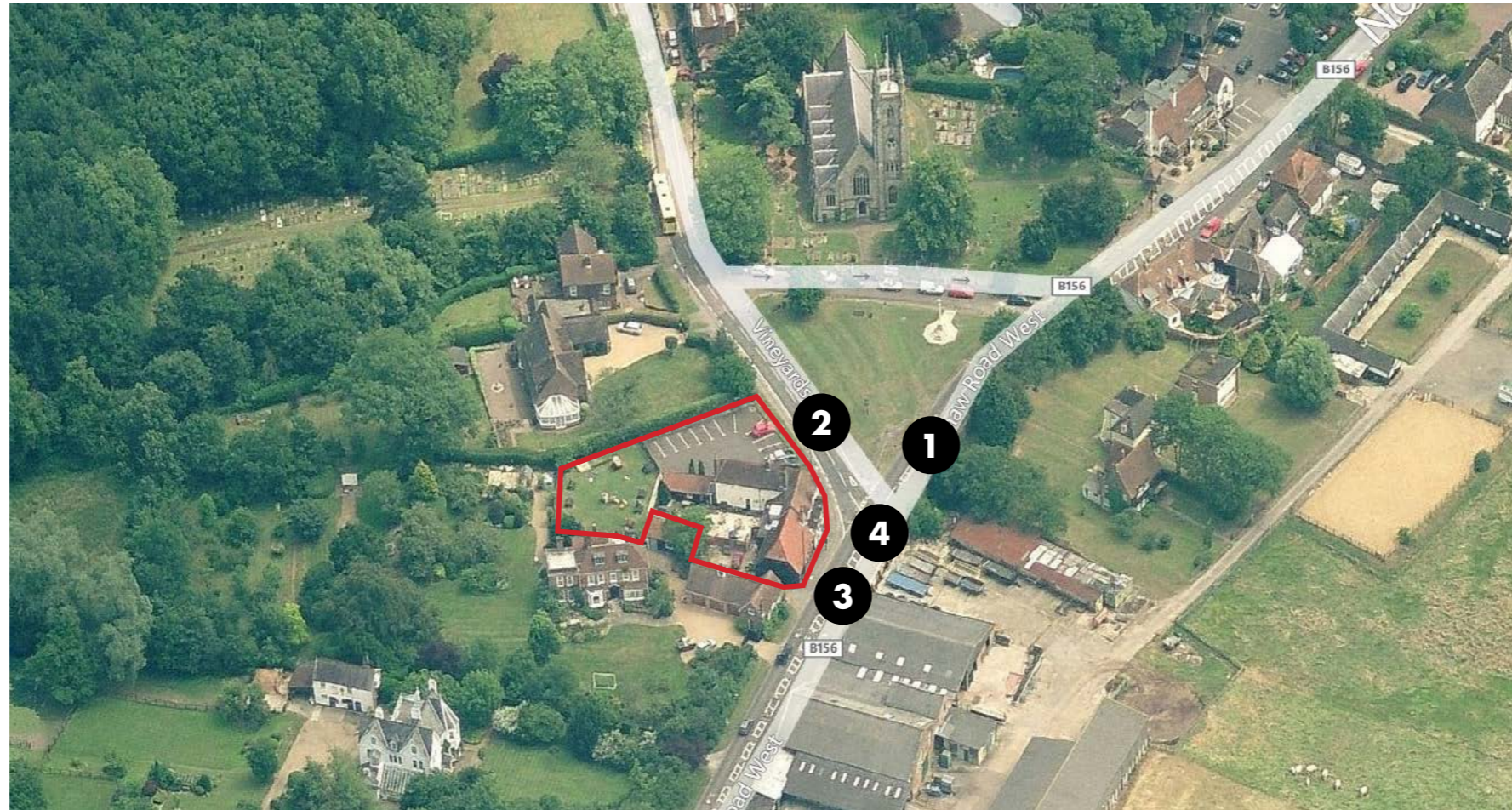
3. Site and Surroundings

The Sun sits on generous grounds with gardens to the rear and a car park to its right. To the front of the PH is a small village green with a War Memorial. The Sun is looking tatty from the street frontage and as such is no longer looking inviting for local people to come and visit.

The Sun is located within the centre of Northaw Conservation Area and forms a cluster of Listed Buildings of varying quality.

The Sun is currently set up as public bar/restaurant on the ground floor with owner's accommodation on the first floor.

A full description of the building can be found within the supplementary Heritage Statement.



1. Approach to the site from Northaw Road West



2. Approach to site from Vineyard's Road



3. Approach to site from Judges Hill north



4. The Sun - front elevation as seen from Northaw Road West

4. Proposal

4A. Pre-Applications

A pre-application submission and follow ups were held with the Councils Conservation and Listed Building Officer and Senior Planning Officer. This was a very useful process in that elements of the proposal were deemed acceptable whilst the extension required further justification for its siting.

Additional work has been done on the repositioning, design and justification of the extension to provide protection and respect to the Listed Building as well as it functioning as a PH.

Together, this Design and Access Statement, Heritage Statement and submitted drawings provide justification and assurance of respect and care to the Listed Building.

4B. Proposals

The proposed works consist of an extension to the rear of The Sun detailed to provide separation between historic fabric and new architecture; including a series of sympathetic internal alterations involving the loss of modern partitions.

All areas of the proposal are fully examined in the submitted Heritage Statement.



Artist's Impression of the Rear Elevation

5. Assessment of Proposals

This section of the Design and Access Statement will consider the proposed in relation to:

- 5.1 Financial Considerations**
- 5.2 The Conservation Area**
- 5.3 Design**
- 5.4 The Green Belt**
- 5.5 Car parking**
- 5.6 Neighbours**

The submitted Heritage Statement fully considers the works on the Listed Building and will not be repeated here.

5.1 Financial Considerations

A financial appraisal of the existing and proposed operations has been made by a financial expert who lives only 4 miles from The Sun and has been a patron of the PH over the years. The author of the report has vast experience in banking and is a financial expert in advising PH/Restaurants.

The full report should be read in conjunction with this Design and Access Statement, Heritage Statement and Drawings to give a full picture of the existing/previous operation and the proposed.

The report identifies nationally and locally, that customers have switched focus from attending premises for drinking to dining. This is partly down to the availability of cheap alcohol in supermarkets and the reduced amount of alcohol consumption in the population. Therefore, PHs are seen as a destination to eat and socialise rather than just drink. The report also identifies that the location is relatively remote and as such with a local of population of 5000, it will rely on the PH/Restaurant being a destination to draw upon a wider customer base from nearby. This is helped significantly by its countryside location and what could be a majestic building once refurbished.

The report makes a strong financial and business case for the extension to increase table covers from 30 to 80, to enable a dry led operation rather than the previous wet led with some food.

Copies of demand notices, legal letters and collection agency correspondence are provided in the Supplementary document titled; Payment Demands to Previous Owners. These show that the previous owners struggled to keep the PH afloat and this is well known in the local area and banking/funding set up. As such a significant change is needed to establish the new business and give it the best possible chance of success for the local community.

For full details refer to Supplementary Viability Report

5.2 The Conservation Area

The majority of the works are to take place internally and to the rear of the building which will not have an affect upon the Conservation Area. However, the building is undergoing a programme of maintenance to the exterior of the building before it falls into further disrepair. It is acknowledged that previous owners have ignored damaging water ingress and this is receiving attention before historic elements of the building are lost.

Overall, the proposed works to The Sun will enhance its appearance within the heart of the Northaw Conservation Area, particularly due to it fronting the village Green and being adjacent to Church Of St Thomas a Becket, the Conservation Area principle building.

With The Sun as a fully functioning business again, locals and visitors will be able to appreciate the buildings handsomeness once again.

5.3 Design

The design of the extension is such that proposes a traditional form with separation detailing which will differentiate between the historic fabric of the building and new seating area for the business. Materials are carefully chosen to match the existing building and compliment the design.

The form of the extension is modest in stature and will provide a new high quality chapter within the story board of The Suns lifespan. Due to the existing alterations reading as a story board of change reacting to the need for the building to adapt for commercial reasons historically, the new extension will complement and enhance the building for the same reasons.

The proposals have been designed to preserve all original historic fabric of the Listed Building; with all existing openings maintained and unaffected by the proposal in respect of the buildings varied past. The opening remain as entries or passage-ways to the newly formed cohesive flow through the building.

5. Assessment of Proposals

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5.4 The Green Belt

Policy RA12 supports the protection of Public Houses. For PHs to survive, they need to be able to offer a range of services. No longer can a wet pub survive on beer and a pork pie. Customers expect much more. This was demonstrated in the previous ownership, that the level of food and drink sales were insufficient to keep the doors open and bailiffs out.

PHs are expected to offer a range of services from breakfast through to dinner to keep enough money running through the business to survive.

To maintain a level of service for the number of customers to be able to enjoy The Sun, it needs to be bigger. It is simple maths. If The Sun accommodates insufficient numbers of customers, the business will fail and the building will eventually be used for another purpose.

To enable the business to flourish, the extension is needed to increase table covers from 30 to 80. The proposed extension is located in such a way as not to impact upon the Green Belt. It is of modest in scale and proportionate to the size of the existing building.

The size and scale of the extension as well as its modest appearance and careful location will not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building as it existed in 1948. It is proportionate in scale and in accordance with the NPPF and Local Plan Policy RA17. The location of the proposed extension was the favoured location by the Senior Planning officer when considering the Pre Application Submission.

5.5 Car parking

Due to the size of the site, only 3 additional car parking spaces are to be proposed. The rationale for this being the destination is a PH/Restaurant. Most customers will either car share or attend the premises by taxi. Whilst the proposal does increase the number of spaces from 16 to 19, anything larger will impact the openness of the Green Belt and due to the low cost of taxis in relation to a night out, the proposed parking spaces are deemed sufficient enough and proportionate to the scale of the PH.

It is company policy that staff either cycle, use a motorbike, public transport or walk to work. The new access to the car park has been relocated away from the junction to enable greater visibility splays for pedestrian safety within the village.

A significant level of landscaping is proposed to soften the impact of the car parking in relation to the Listed Building a village green setting.

Cycle parking and motorbike parking is proposed in its own location to the West of The Sun in excess of that required by the Council to mitigate against slightly lower car parking levels.

Parking provision should be applied flexibly to the proposal due to it being a Listed Building, being within the Green Belt and set within the centre of the Conservation Area.

5.6 Neighbours

The application attempts to keep The Sun as a PH through considerate alteration and extension. By the proposal being retained as a Public House, it is envisaged that there would be none/little impact upon neighbouring occupiers except for having a nice PH to visit.

6. Conclusion

The charm of the building is its historic status. However, for it to re-open as a PH/Restaurant, changes need to take place to enable the business to operate and flourish. The changes are respectful to the Listed Building.

It has been demonstrated within this Design and Access Statement, Heritage Statement and drawings how the proposed extension would be of a suitable scale for the Listed Building that all the works would preserve and enhance the quality of the building for future generations.

Alterations made which are visible from the street would be positive in that they comprise of reinstatement and improvement of original features. Alterations proposed to the rear of the building would be unnoticeable from the street scene and would enable the building to operate once again as a PH. These alterations have been designed to respect the setting of The Sun and unify the building in a respectful and considerate manner.

The proposal is a sensitive approach to a special building, which the owner cherishes and wishes for it to be the best it can. The owners look forward to working with the Council to enable the works and bring back to use The Sun Public House and Restaurant.



Artist's Impression of the Rear Elevation

8. Application Drawings

The associated planning application drawings consist of:

304-EX-01
304-EX-02
304-EX-03

304-PL-01
304-PL-02
304-PL-03
304-PL-04
304-PL-05