



DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

37 Broad Street, Wokingham, RG40 1AU

Prepared for: Mr and Mrs Thapar

The purpose of this report is to accompany a planning or Listed Building application. A DAS provides a framework for applicants to explain how a proposed development is a suitable response to the site and its setting, and demonstrate that it can be adequately accessed by prospective users

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Job number: 2174
37 Broad Street, Wokingham, RG40 1AU

1. INTRODUCTION

Project Address: 37 Broad Street, Wokingham, RG40 1AU

Local Authority: Wokingham Borough Council

Conservation Area: Wokingham Town Centre

Current Building Use: Residential

Proposed Building Use: Residential

Listing Status: Grade II List entry no. 1154679

Project Overview:

Rear ground floor and basement extension to existing house. New side conservation rooflights. New set back dormer within roof valley behind chimney. Internal alterations and refurbishment. Removal of part of the side wall and replacement with a fence.

There is a wish to improve the existing residential accommodation to maximise functional use and improve the aesthetics of the rear elevation. The property was converted to residential in 2009 however the minimum was done to the property in order to achieve this by the last owners. There is a wish by the new owners to bring the internals up to its former high status as a single dwelling for the benefit of the conservation of the property long term.



2. SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

37 Broad Street is one of a matching pair of mid 19th Century semi detached Grade II Listed town houses with prominent and distinctive gable ends addressing Broad Street, a busy high trafficked route through the town. It is located in a prominent location within Wokingham Town Centre.

The local area is a Conservation Area. The Conservation Area Appraisal describes Broad Street as a large open space dominated by a wide road. The buildings along Broad Street are mainly of detached and individual styles predominantly of red brick and slate.

No. 37 is a red brick property with stone quoins and details and has 3 storeys plus a basement. It is set immediately on the pavement edge. The ground floor is elevated from the street level and accessed at the front and rear by a short flight of steps. The roof is a slate roof with clay ridge tiles with red brick chimneys being located to the valley side of each of the pair. Ornately detailed fascia boards are fixed to the gable ends. The building has a bay window to the front ground and basement and largely traditional painted timber sash windows throughout.

The rear of the property is much plainer in detail and unlike the front does not match the neighbouring property. There is a large decked area covering a basement which is accessed from some rear steps. There are metal escape railings scattered across the rear elevation from its former use as an office block. The property has a long and good sized rear garden.

There is a high side gate giving vehicle access to the side of the property. The width however is not quite suitable for 1 car including the ability to enter and exit the vehicle. It is understood under a previous consent that the use at the side was changed to garden area.

The property is a single residential unit however in the past has been used as offices.



Image taken from Google Earth to illustrate context

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3. PLANNING HISTORY

App. No.: 091884

Description: Proposed change of use of offices to residential use, plus alterations to form a single dwelling and erection of wrought iron gates and railings.

Received Date: 16/03/2009 Decision Date: 22/05/2009 Decision: Approve

App. No.: 091898

Description: Listed Building application for proposed change of use of offices to residential use, plus alterations to form a single dwelling and erection of wrought iron gates and railings.

Received Date: 16/03/2009 Decision Date: 22/05/2009 Decision: Approve

App. No.: 090134

Description: Proposed change of use from offices to residential, plus alterations to form two x 1 bedroom flat, one x 2 bedroom flat and erection of wrought iron gates and railings.

Received Date: 16/02/2009 Decision Date: 23/02/2009 Decision: Not proceeded with

App. No.: 090131

Description: Listed Building application for proposed change of use from offices to residential, plus alterations to form two x 1 bedroom flat, one x 2 bedroom flat and erection of wrought iron gates and railings.

Received Date: 16/02/2009 Decision Date: 23/02/2009 Decision: Not proceeded with

App. No.: 080060

Description: Proposed change of use to residential. Alterations to form 4 x 1 bedroom flats and erection of open porch on side elevation and wrought iron fence

Received Date: 23/10/2008 Decision Date: 24/12/2008 Decision: Refused

App. No.: 080069

Description: Listed Building Application for proposed change of use to residential. Alterations to form 4 x 1 bedroom flats and erection of open porch on side elevation and wrought iron fence

Received Date: 04/11/2008 Decision Date: 24/12/2008 Decision: Refused

App. No.: 081418

Description: Proposed change of use from offices to D1

Received Date: 09/05/2008 Decision Date: 28/07/2008 Decision: Approve

App. No.: 030944

Description: Listed building application for the proposed installation of external improvements to disabled access plus the installation of external condenser.

Received Date: 29/09/2003 Decision Date: 20/11/2003 Decision: Approve

App. No.: 030495

Description: Circular 18/84 for the proposed erection of handrails to improve disabled access to building. Plus external condenser.

Received Date: 22/08/2003 Decision Date: 04/11/2003 Decision: No objections

App. No.: 971896

Description: Proposed Formation Of External Spiral Fire Escape Staircase To Rear Of Property

Received Date: 16/01/1997 Decision Date: 13/03/1997 Decision: Refused

App. No.: 971897

Description: Proposed Formation Of Spiral Staircase To Rear Of Building And Other Repair Work

Received Date: 16/01/1997 Decision Date: 13/03/1997 Decision: Refused

4. DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

Use and Amount:

There is no proposed change of use from residential, and the proposal supports and maximises the functionality of the building as a single dwelling. The existing house has a GIA of 224m². The rear extensions add GIA of 4m² to the Lower Ground floor, 16m² to the Ground floor and 3.5m² to the first floor. The reconfiguration of the second floor, including the dormer to the back room, adds 3m² of useable floor area. The total GIA addition (excluding the rear dormer which improves head room rather than adding m² is 25.5m². This is an increase of 11% which is a small and reasonable increase to achieve maximum functionality.

Layout and Scale:

The proposed works largely retain the original floor layout retaining the architectural detailing where present in the property, including the existing staircase. The most notable changes in layout relate to the two proposed rear extensions. The contemporary brick glazed extension at ground floor and basement level, replacing the existing basement projection, provides larger reception/family spaces including a large open plan kitchen in the basement to meet the needs of 21st century family life. A lightwell with space for a small table and chairs supplies this kitchen with natural light to make it a bright and pleasant space. A new bootroom with WC at ground floor improves the accessibility of the dwelling for ambulant disabled visitors.

The second extension, a brick 'tower' extension, provides a boot room to the ground floor and a new family bathroom on the first floor. The existing first floor bathroom will be converted to a home office. By moving the bathroom to the rear of the property it gives better light levels for a home office as well as improved privacy for the bathroom. The existing first floor front bedroom will be provided with an ensuite by sectioning off a 2.5m² area and utilising the existing plumbing at this end of the property..

The second floor is reconfigured as a new master suite, including dressing room and ensuite, with repositioned walls give full use to all floor area with at least 1.5m of headroom. The ensuite, similar to the floor below, is created by sectioning off an area, this time of 3.3m². The dressing room/back bedroom has a box dormer within the roof valley, to further improve head height in a space which is quite limited. This also provides maintenance access to the valley which is currently lacking entirely. This is positioned to the rear only, hidden behind the chimney and set back from the eaves.

Light levels in the second floor are improved with conservation rooflights. An additional frosted side window is also added to the second floor landing for the same purpose. The conservation rooflights are substantially set back from the front elevation to ensure minimal impact upon any historic views along the road.

Scale Height and Mass:

There is deliberately no change to the scale or massing of the building from the street scene with the proposed rear extensions sympathetically concealed from view. The new extensions at the rear bring the basement back into functional use in a high quality manner whilst remaining subservient to the original building massing.

The proposed dormer extension is set well back from the front elevation and concealed in the roof valley and behind the chimney from the wider context.

Landscaping:

The rear garden is largely unchanged apart from the improved accessibility from the house. The side area formally changed to garden under a previous application is to be used as a parking space to allow an electric car charging point and off street parking for the dwelling, improving the street aesthetics.

Appearance:

The aim of the proposals is to retain the architectural significance of the front elevation whilst enhancing the currently poor condition rear elevation.

The new rear extension is designed to be a modern intervention sympathetically scaled and designed to sit subserviently next to the visually dominant townhouse, allowing the original building form to be legible. The current rear elevation is of a much lower architectural significance and is currently suffering the scars of its previous office use.

Beyond the site to the rear sits the Waitrose carpark. High walls and trees hide most of the rear elevation from view, excepting the upmost floor. The removal of the metal platforms, rails and ladders left over from the building's tenure as offices will improve the look of the building from this carpark as well as from within the garden.

The 'tower' extension reaching to the 1st floor, as noted in the pre-app advice, is of a form that would not be unusual or surprising to find to the rear of similar 19th century town houses. It also sits below the existing roof form maintaining its legibility.

Access, Parking and Transport:

The side wall was a point of discussion during the pre app and its removal generated concern from the streetview perspective and the impact from increasing the exposure level to the adjacent Listed Building. As a result changes have been made largely retaining the wall. As a compromise in order to provide a parking space in a sustainable manner the wall is proposed to be cut back on the rear portion only at the point where it pinches below the required 2.5m width. A fence will go up in its place maintaining protection to the Listed Building. Th compromise achieves the desired end goal without impacting upon the street view and without increasing the exposure level to the Listed Building.

The provision of a parking space supports the property to be preserved as it was originally built: as a single family dwelling.

While the provision of only one space falls short of the council's car parking standards for a dwelling of this size, site constraints make this the only viable place for a parking space. However the site location within the town centre location gives very good access to bus and train options as well as to amenities. On-street parking options are limited; The parking bays directly outside the property are limited to 30 minutes.

5. POLICY ASSESSMENT

Principle of Development:

When the building use changed from offices to residential in 2009, minimal changes were made. This proposal seeks to enhance the functionality of the property ensuring the provision of critical elements for long term use and conservation such as a larger functioning kitchen and a master bedroom suite.

The basement is currently in a poor condition and unusable in parts. The works bring those parts of the building back into functional use.

Sustainable Development:

Improving the property's functionality as a family home seeks to ensure high quality investment in the conservation of this listed property for future years.

Character and Appearance of the Area:

Located close to prominent dwellings such as The Elms and Montague House, the property is situated within a well preserved collection of historic buildings reflecting the 19th Century prosperity of Wokingham, so the long term preservation of this building is of benefit to the area. The building has architectural value from the front as the left half of a pair that forms an important part of the historical street-scene of Broad Street. The uninterrupted pitches, with mirrored chimney stacks distinctly located half-way up the internal valley pitch, are particularly of note.

The new roof addition of a rear dormer is set well back from the front elevation elevations and concealing it in the roof valley and behind the chimney, this line is preserved. It is also substantially set back from the rear elevation. Roof lights on the north-west roof are Conservation in style with low profiles to minimise their appearance through blending into the roof slates.

While the general appearance of the house is befitting of the surrounding character with materiality and detailing reflecting the local vernacular, closer inspection reveals a previous lack of care in the maintenance of the building, including the loss of the original front door and sash windows to the basement. This loss shall be rectified by replacing with current uPVC windows and composite front door with more appropriate, timber versions detailed in accordance with the styling of the building.

The rear extensions are designed to not be visible from the Broad Street, so have minimal impact on the character and appearance of the area.

Amenity – Impact on Site Users:

The extensions are minimal to achieve functionality and there is no compromise to the amenity space provision. The improved accessibility to the garden space from the house and improved visual connection from the extensions will improve the usability of the amenity space.

Amenity – Impact on Neighbours:

The new extensions are on the ground floor and basement having little impact upon the neighbours. The first floor extension is for the use of a bathroom and the window will have obscured glass.

By situating the windows to face down the garden, the same direction as the existing rear windows there is no detrimental overall impact upon the neighbours. The 'tower' extension is deliberately sized so not to cause overshadowing issues.

The new proposed side window to the second floor landing will be frosted to minimise its impact on No.39.

Ecology, Trees and Landscaping:

The garden area consists of a mix of paths and planted borders. No proposed change to the majority of the landscaping or garden, hence no ecological impact from the proposals. The new rear extensions are located over existing decking and paved areas. There are no proposed tree works.

Cycle Provision:

The proposed outdoor store on the opposite side of the rear lightwell will provide space to give the option of secure bike storage which isn't currently available.

Refuse Provision:

There is no formal change to the existing provision.

Drainage and SuDS:

New bathrooms, cloakrooms and ensembles are located near to or over existing sanitary accommodation, so can easily be connected into the existing foul drainage system. The new kitchen is located below the existing kitchen.

Contamination:

There is no known site contamination. All below ground works occur in previously disturbed areas.

Community Infrastructure Levy:

The proposals are CIL exempt due to their scale and residential nature. The extension is an enlargement of a dwelling which is the individual's sole or main residence and does not comprise a new dwelling.

6. CONCLUSION

The extensions are located at the rear of the property and are small scale and proportional to the existing dwelling.

There is no detrimental impact upon neighbouring properties in terms of overlooking or overshadowing.

The works are an evolution resulting from a constructive pre application discussion with the local authority.

There is net gain for the property both functionally and aesthetically from high quality investment supporting its function as a single family home. Inappropriate past works to the building such as rear escape ladders, UPVC windows and a composite front door will be removed and replaced with more architecturally sympathetic elements.

The works act in accordance with the NPPF and the local plan and should be supported by the local authority.