

Application to convert the existing building to
form a 1 bedroomed holiday apartment

The Meeting Room
Fore Street, Beer

Design & Access Statement
Incorporating Statement of Significance

Rev 0: December 2020



5 High Bank, West Hill, Ottery St Mary, Devon EX11 1XX
01404 234516 info@beandesign.co.uk

1 INTRODUCTION

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared by Bean Designed in support of a Planning Application for the conversion of the existing outbuilding sited to the rear of the former Gospel Hall, Fore Street Beer.

This design statement has been prepared to document the design process undertaken. Within this document a series of drawings have been produced which identify key design elements and illustrate how they have been applied. This statement must be read in conjunction with the application drawings, to provide a background to the proposed conversion.

This Statement also includes a Heritage Statement as the building lies within the defined Conservation Area of Beer.

Development Description

The proposal is for the conversion of the existing outbuilding to form a one bedroomed holiday apartment. The outbuilding was a former Meeting Room for the adjacent former Gospel Hall (now converted into holiday accommodation under Planning Consent 10/0269/FUL). The Building has previously been consented to be converted into a residential annex for the former Bumbles Locker, (Planning Consent 17/2544/FUL).

The proposal seeks to provide a sympathetic conversion to the original building with minimal changes to the older part of the building, and re-instatement of the existing chimney and flue (omitted on the approved consent), and retention of all existing openings. The proposal seeks to remove the later lean to side addition, which is partially subterranean and suffers from damp as a result. The proposal removes this later addition and uses the space to form a private outdoor courtyard for the holiday accommodation.

The proposal seeks to carefully refurbish and conserve the existing structure, replacing like for like where required, retaining its character and charm.

The existing curtilage of the building and wider land ownership of our Clients provides space for 1 allocated parking space, located to the north-east of the courtyard.

The building is some-what tucked away from Fore Street, hidden behind the former Gospel Hall, and to this extent it is a hidden gem, concealed from views off Fore Street.

The site is located in an area that at initial glance would appear to be at risk from surface water flooding (see accompanying Environmental Report), however the finished floor level of the building is almost 900mm higher than the level of Fore Street in front of the former Bumbles Locker.

2 Purpose and Scope

This Statement responds to the requirements of the Town and Country Planning Development Management Procedure Order (England) (Amendment) 2015 for applications of this type to be accompanied by a Design and Access Statement.

The aims of the statement are to ensure design is integral to the creation of this development

The content of the design element of the statement aims to demonstrate how the physical characteristics of the scheme have been influenced by a thorough process. The process undertaken includes:

- Assessment
- Involvement
- Evaluation
- Design

The statement also seeks to address the following factors:

Use - What the land and buildings will be used for

Amount - How much development can the site accommodate

Layout - How the buildings and public and private spaces can be positioned and the relationship between them and buildings and spaces around the site.

Scale - How big the buildings and spaces could be in terms of appropriate height, width and length.

Landscaping - how a landscape structure can be developed within both the residential area and the Public Open Spaces to enhance and protect the character of the local landscape

Appearance - What the building and spaces could look like

The access element of the statement also includes two aspects of access to the development:

Vehicular and transport links - Why the access points and routes have been chosen, and how the site responds to road layout and public transport provision.

Inclusive access - How everyone can get to and move through the place on equal terms regardless of ages, disability, ethnicity or social grouping.

2 PLANNING POLICY

This section of the Design and Access Statement reviews the National Planning policies in relation to the design aspects of the scheme.

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK REVISED FEBRUARY 2019

The National Planning Policy Framework, (NPPF) is the Government's key reforms to make the planning system less complex and more accessible, to protect the environment and to promote sustainable growth.

The overarching theme of the NPPF is sustainable development and this is outlined in paragraph 7, which states:

“The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.”

Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):

- a) an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;
- b) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and
- c) an environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

WELL-DESIGNED PLACES

Paragraph 124 states that *“The creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.*

Paragraph 127 states *“Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:*

- a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*
- b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;*
- c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);*

2 PLANNING POLICY

d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;

e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and

f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

Paragraph 129 states that *“Local planning authorities should ensure that they have access to, and make appropriate use of, tools and processes for assessing and improving the design of development. These include workshops to engage the local community, design advice and review arrangements, and assessment frameworks such as Building for Life.”*

PROPOSALS AFFECTING HERITAGE ASSETS

Paragraph 189 states that *“In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation”.*

Paragraph 190 states that *“Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.”*

Paragraph 192 states that *“In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:*

a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;

b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and

c) the desirability of new development”

Paragraph 200 states that, *“Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.”*

3 PLANNING POLICY

This section of the Design and Access Statement reviews the East Devon District Council Local Plan - its strategies and policies in relation to the proposal.

EAST DEVON LOCAL PLAN ADOPTED JANUARY 2016

Strategy 48

Local Distinctiveness in the Built Environment

Local distinctiveness and the importance of local design standards in the development process will be of critical importance to ensure that East Devon's towns and villages retain their intrinsic physical built qualities. Where towns or villages are or have been despoiled we will seek to have qualities reinstated through good design. Use of local materials and local forms and styles will be essential to this distinctiveness.

We will work with our partners and local communities to produce Design Statements to guide new development and ensure its appropriateness.

Strategy 49

The Historic Environment

The physical and cultural heritage of the district, including archaeological assets and historic landscape character, will be conserved and enhanced and the contribution that historic places make to the economic and social well-being of the population will be recognised, evaluated and promoted. We will work with our partners and local communities to produce or update conservation area appraisals and conservation area management plans.

Policy D1 - Design and Local Distinctiveness:

In order to ensure that new development, including the refurbishment of existing buildings to include renewable energy, is of a high quality design and locally distinctive, a formal Design and Access Statement should accompany applications setting out the design principles to be adopted should accompany proposals for new development. Proposals should have regard to Village and Design Statements and other local policy proposals, including Neighbourhood Plans, whether adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance or promoted through other means.

Proposals will only be permitted where they:

1. Respect the key characteristics and special qualities of the area in which the development is proposed.
2. Ensure that the scale, massing, density, height, fenestration and materials of buildings relate well to their context.
3. Do not adversely affect:
 - a) The distinctive historic or architectural character of the area.
 - b) The urban form, in terms of significant street patterns, groups of buildings and open spaces.
 - c) Important landscape characteristics, prominent topographical features and important ecological features.
 - d) Trees worthy of retention.
 - e) The amenity of occupiers of adjoining residential properties.
 - f) The amenity of occupants of proposed future residential properties, with respect to access to open space, storage space for bins and bicycles and prams and other uses; these considerations can be especially important in respect of proposals for conversions into flats.
4. Have due regard for important aspects of detail and quality and should incorporate:
 - a) Secure and attractive layouts with safe and convenient access for the whole community, including disabled users.
 - b) Measures to create a safe environment for the community and reduce the potential for crime.

3 PLANNING POLICY

- c) Use of appropriate building materials and techniques respecting local tradition and vernacular styles as well as, where possible, contributing to low embodied energy and CO2 reduction.
- d) Necessary and appropriate street lighting and furniture and, subject to negotiation with developers, public art integral to the design.
- e) Features that maintain good levels of daylight and sunlight into and between buildings to minimise the need for powered lighting.
- f) Appropriate 'greening' measures relating to landscaping and planting, open space provision and permeability of hard surfaces.

5. Incorporate measures to reduce carbon emissions and minimise the risks associated with climate change. Measures to secure management of waste in accordance with the waste hierarchy (reduce, reuse, recycle, recovery, disposal) should also feature in proposals during the construction and operational phases.

6. Green Infrastructure and open spaces should be designed and located in a way that will minimise any potential security concerns for users.

7. Mitigate potential adverse impacts, such as noise, smell, dust, arising from developments, both during and after construction.

The current Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plans, the East Devon and Blackdown Hills Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and East Devon District Landscape Character Assessment & Management Guidelines 2008 and the Devon County Council Landscape Character Areas Assessment should be used in design and management considerations.

Policy EN8 - Significance of Heritage Assets and their Setting

When considering development proposals the significance of any heritage assets and their settings should first be established by the applicant through a proportionate but systematic assessment following East Devon District Council guidance notes for 'Assessment of Significance' (and the English Heritage guidance "The Setting Of Heritage Assets"), or any replacement guidance, sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on the significance of the asset. This policy applies to both designated and non-designated heritage assets, including any identified on the East Devon local list.

Policy EN9 - Development Affecting a Designated Heritage Asset

The Council will not grant permission for developments involving substantial harm or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset unless it can be demonstrated that it is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

4 LISTING

The Meeting Room, Off Fore Street, Beer.

The existing building is not a Listed building and is not associated with any surrounding Listed Building. Its inclusion within the wider designated Conservation Area requires it to be considered as a Heritage Asset.

The proposal is for a suite of renovation works to the building, retaining its openings and detailing, with the removal of the later lean-to addition at the buildings north-eastern end, creating a small courtyard and removing existing damp problems within this part of the building. The retained building will be dry-lined and insulated, and its services located to be flood resilient.

Adjacent Listed Buildings

Church of St Michael GVII

SY 2289 BEER FORE STREET 28/55 (east side)

Parish church. 1877 by Hayward of Exeter. Coursed stone with freestone dressings and slate roofs. Large church in Early English/Decorated style. Nave with four-light Decorated west window. Multifoil round clerestory windows. Low north and south aisles with Decorated three-light windows. Chancel with Decorated five-light east window. North and south transepts. Tower at north-west corner in four stages, top stage with twin lancet bell openings with colonettes, embattled parapet and polygonal corner turret. Originally had a large stone spire with lucarnes. Vestibule across west end with three bay Early English arcade. Interior: Four bay north and south arcade with marble piers and foliated capitals. Chancel arch has marble shafts. Nave roof with arched braces to collars and wind braces. Contemporary furnishings including choir stalls and stone pulpit and font.

Listing NGR: SY2295189368

Shepherd's Cottage

SY 2289 BEER THE SQUARE 28/61 8.5.67 Shepherd's Cottage (previously listed as No 2-3 Shepherd's Cottage, Fore Street) GV II

Range of cottages, now one. Circa C17/18 white-washed and partly plastered stone rubble cottage range. Thatched roof with hipped and half hipped ends, and eyebrow eaves. Two storeys. Asymmetrical U-shaped plan with projecting wings left and right. 1:2:2 bays. Small C19 and modern casements with glazing bars. Two modern thatched roof porches in centre recess. Stone chimney stacks heightened in brick. Wing built on steep bank at rear (west).

Listing NGR: SY2282289431

5 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Assessment of Impact

The proposals will result in a change to the external appearance of the building, reducing its scale slightly when viewed from the north-east, The proposed changes return the simplicity of the building to its original form.

Internally, the re-instatement of the original fireplace, lost on the previous consent, and the retention of the north-eastern gable wall, again lost on the previous consent retains the building integrity and heritage.

Statement of Significance

It is believed that the proposed sympathetic changes to the rear elevation will have a neutral to slight positive impact upon the Heritage Asset.

The restoration and conversion work is to be carried out using traditional methods and techniques employing local craftspeople in accordance with best practice.

The building itself has a very limited visual envelope, and as such has no visual relationship with any surrounding listed building or structure.

Therefore, the changes will have no significant impact upon these heritage assets.

Overall, the proposed works will have a neutral to slight positive impact on the Heritage Asset

6 ACCESS

This section of the Statement will address access issues to the site, including the following aspects:

Policy – justification of the relevant national planning policies.

Site Circumstances – how any specific issues, which might affect access to the development, have been addressed.

Inclusive access - how everyone can get to and move through the place on equal terms regardless of ages, disability, ethnicity or social grouping.

Policy

At a national level, National Planning Policy Framework (February 2019) provides guidance on how transport policies have an important role to play in facilitating sustainable development but also in contributing to wider sustainability and health objectives.

It is felt that the proposed extension to this consented dwelling would not generate a significant increase in traffic volumes.

Site Circumstances

The site is located within the centre of Beer, and has an existing vehicular access onto the adopted highway. This access is felt to be sufficient in its size and visibility to serve the proposed new dwelling

External Access

People are very different in their needs, and in the way they use the built environment. An inclusive environment recognises and accommodates these differences in a way that is universal. An inclusive design provides a single solution for everyone.

The principles of an inclusive environment will be:

- Easily used by as many people as possible without undue effort, special treatment or separation.
- Able to offer people the freedom to choose how they access and allow them to participate equally in all, activities it may host.
- Able to embrace diversity and difference, to be safe, legible and of high quality

The proposed works would leave the an occasional use doorway that could provide suitable access to the building for mobility impaired visitors.

Internal Access

Inclusive access within the building provides for ease of movement by all social groupings and the designs will be compliant with Part M of Building Regulations.

The proposed works considered access and use of the environment and the dwellings by residents and visitors. Accessibility has been incorporated while being mindful of the overall aesthetic and design aims of the proposals and with due consideration given to the constraints of the site.