

## DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT FOR EXTENSIONS/ ALTERATIONS TO 24 VAN-DIEMANS LANE, LITTLEMORE, OXFORD



### Site Context/ The Property and Planning History:

24 Van-Diemans Lane is a semi-detached property that consists of 4 self-contained apartments, having been converted in 2006. To the ground floor, there is a 2 bedroom apartment and a studio flat. To the first floor there are 2 studio apartments. There is a large shared rear garden and a smaller front garden as well as off street parking for one vehicle. Bins get stored around the side of the property and there is no where currently to store bicycles. The property would have probably been built in the early 1950s as a local authority three bedroom dwelling with bathroom on the ground floor. Planning permission had been granted in 1990 for a first floor rear extension and in 1991 for a small single storey front extension. Both of these had been implemented. In 2017 an application was approved in order to certify the lawful use of the property as 4 apartments. This use had been established for a period of in excess of 10 years.

Van-Diemans Lane is situated in Littlemore, Oxford. Littlemore is a village to the Southeast of Oxford city which like many other settlements has been swallowed up and become integral to Oxford City as a suburb. The old part of the village and conservation area lies South of the ring road. Van-Diemans Lane is situated within the ring road and close to Cowley Centre.

Cowley Centre provides as a district shopping centre with many of the larger shops and supermarkets. The application site is in a highly prominent and accessible location which is a short walk away from Cowley Centre. There are regular bus services with bus stops on the nearby Cowley Road and Barns Road. Buses provide both access to the City Centre and Cowley Centre as well as Littlemore & Blackbird Leys. There is a large swimming and leisure facility in Blackbird Leys. Cowley itself has shops, supermarkets and restaurants and takeaway businesses.

### **The Proposal:**

Proposals relate generally to improving upon the quality and size of accommodation. The existing apartments vary in size between 43 square metres for the two bedroom apartment to only 19 square metres for the smallest studio apartment. As such these do not meet guidelines set out for minimum apartment sizes by far. The apartments are basic in terms of the accommodation that they offer and it is hoped to be able to make some improvements.

The following changes are proposed. Firstly to apartment 1, the two bedroom apartment, this will remain as a two bedroom apartment but have an increased floor area to 62 square metres. There will be increased amount of living space and the shower room will become integral to the apartment. Currently access is off the communal lobby area.

Secondly apartment 2, the rear ground floor studio apartment will become a proper one bedroom apartment and increase to 53 square metres in size. To the first floor, apartment 3, currently a studio apartment will become a one bedroom apartment and increase to 38.5 square metres in size. Finally, apartment 4, currently the smallest studio apartment will become a one bedroom apartment and increase to 47 square metres in size.

It is intended that apartment 1 will be suitable for a small family and all other apartments will suit couples. At present some of the apartments are already occupied by couples but space is limited and as such the accommodation that is being provided is sub- standard.

The extra floor areas created and improvements proposed result in some extensions to the rear and a small dormer window to the front. It is proposed to erect a three metre two storey rear extension immediately adjacent to number 26. It is proposed to extend backwards on the first floor to the current depth of the current single storey element on the right hand side closer to number 22. Finally a wrap around single storey element is proposed to the rear of the existing ground floor extension. Whilst the overall scale of the building would increase significantly, the changes would mainly be out of sight from the front, also the proposed extensions

are a significant distance away from the neighbouring properties. Number 22 has its first floor bathroom to the side closest to number 24 and number 26 is to the Southeast of number 24. As such the proposed 3 metre rear extension would not affect daylight levels or amenity levels. The extra ground floor element is a significant distance away. It is also worth noting that the plot is wide and there is a large back garden. Therefore there will still be plenty of amenity space available and rear access will be retained.

Materials will all match the existing. Walls will be rendered to match existing. Windows will be in UPVC to match and roofs will be in plain concrete tiles to match.

The property is not situated within a conservation area and proposals will not result in loss of any trees or hedges.

#### **Overlooking, daylight and sunlight assessment:**

In terms of the overlooking of rear gardens to adjoining houses, there is already overlooking from first floor rooms at the rear and side. The proposed window to the dining area of flat 4 would be obscure glazed and non openable below 1.7 metres. All other windows to the side are either existing or to the ground floor where there is no issue of overlooking. The proposed dormer window to the front would overlook the road. Whilst there would be a slight increase in the amount of overlooking, this would not be dissimilar to any other 'city' situation whereby extensions result in more overlooking at first floor level.

In terms of daylight issues as a result of extensions. The proposed additional extensions are a fair distance away from the neighbouring properties. All except for the 3 metre rear extension adjacent to number 26. This extension does cross the suggested 45 degree line, however a 3 metre extension should not be too overbearing and number 26 is Southeast of the proposed extension such that only some West light right at the end of the day in summer months will be compromised somewhat. As a result daylight issues should not be a factor that cause too much concern if approved.

#### **Access (to include vehicle parking):**

There is currently one off street parking space and a small front garden. It is proposed to provide for an extra two off street spaces as well allow for a pedestrian access path to the front doors etc. as well as retain an area of planting. This will allow for three of the apartments to have an off street parking space. At present most of the occupants are needing to park on the street due to lack of off street space.

Rear access is being retained and as such both bins and bicycles can be stored within the rear garden in designated areas. This will keep things out of sight as bins and bicycles at the front can be an eyesore.

In terms of disabled access, the two ground floor apartments that have their access around the side could be provided with level access. Corridor widths and door openings will be of adequate width throughout in order to provide for access.

As discussed above the property is in a sustainable and highly accessible location.

#### **Sustainability:**

The extensions would be built to a good standard and the property will be fully compliant with the latest Building Regulations Standards. As for the existing parts, though in good condition, they would be carefully refurbished and brought up to current standards, in terms of heat losses and wherever possible, insulation would be added and thickened up in order to perform better thermally.

The contractor will be encouraged to responsibly source, local materials and use energy efficient lighting. He will also be advised to show a commitment to employ the best practice, site management principles.

The garden that are to be retained will be provided with additional planting used to enhance the ecological value of the site wherever appropriate and at the front. Our clients intend on providing additional planting to the residential garden areas upon completion.

The health and well being of the residents will be satisfactory by the provision of adequate levels of daylight, sunlight, lower heating bills due to additional insulation wherever possible and further visual improvements to private external space.

Basic building elements of construction will be from responsibly sourced materials as will finishing elements.

#### **Tree Survey, Arboricultural Statement:**

There are no trees on the site that are within falling distance of the proposed extensions.

#### **Rights of Way and Countryside Access:**

There are no rights of way that are affected by the proposals and no change to, or obstruction of walking, cycling and riding resources or countryside access.

**Flood Risk Assessment:**

According to Environment Agency's flood risk maps, the property does not lie within areas of flooding from rivers or sea without defences or areas of extreme flooding.

**Crime and community safety:**

Alterations to the existing house are not expected to have either a positive or negative affect on community safety.

**Biodiversity:**

We believe that this is not applicable to this project. The area of the proposed extensions is already partly hard paved and there is already a dilapidated outbuilding occupying about the same footprint as the proposed outbuilding.

**Heritage Statement:**

We believe that this is not applicable to this project.

**Foul Water:**

To remain as existing.

**Surface Water:**

Surface water would be to Sustainable urban drainage wherever possible. At the front of the property all hard surfaces are as existing. Should they get replaced they will be SUDS compliant. Block paving would be provided with open joints.

**Landscaping Details:**

Some landscaping has been indicated on drawing number 24VDL:P01. Species of plants can be provided if required as a Planning Condition.

**Noise Impact Assessment:**

The conversion work has already taken place and sound proofing between apartments is somewhat substandard. It is proposed wherever possible to improve on this and any new areas where there is a party wall or party ceiling will be to Robust Details standards. The enlarging of the apartments will only have a short term impact upon neighbouring properties in terms of noise impact. Any building works can cause disruption to neighbours but this will be kept to a minimum.

**Conclusion:**

We feel that the design of the new additions to number 24 Van-Diemans Lane offers an attractive solution and one that respects the architectural fabric of the area, moreover the proposed changes would not have a detrimental effect on any of the neighbouring properties or on the area as a whole.

By the creation of larger better quality accommodation this would add variety to the housing stock of Littlemore. The improved quality of accommodation will benefit many residents of the apartments indefinitely.