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## **Design and Access Statement.**

### **Proposed Vehicular Access to Land at Castle Buildings, Llanrhaedre-ym-Mochnant, Powys.**

For and on behalf of  
**Mrs E Roberts**

By  
Woodsyde Developments Ltd

#### **Introduction, Location and Planning**

##### **Introduction.**

This statement considers the issues of providing a vehicular access to the existing property known as Castle Buildings at the western fringe of the village. Castle Buildings fronts the minor county highway that leads to Cefn-Coch to the north-west of the village. Previously the property had no off-highway parking, which resulted in having to park on the highway along with many other dwellings through the village and in the immediate proximity of the property. The on-street parking causes issues with through traffic and the roads tend to become predominantly single-track width, with limited space for vehicles to pass satisfactorily. It is fully appreciated that the building sits within the conservation area and that any works including the driveway will seek to enhance the setting and character of the building in the locality.

This statement includes the information necessary to form the Design and Access Statement required by Section 42 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and guidance within Circular 01/2006. Castle Buildings is a Grade 2 Listed building.

The planning application, being part retrospective proposes the construction of a new vehicular access to create safe and satisfactory off-highway parking in the interest of highway safety.

##### **Location and Site Description.**

The site is located within the western portion of the village of Llanrhaedre-ym-Mochnant and within the Conversation Area. Castle Buildings is a 3-storey dwelling and was originally constructed and occupied as a terrace of 3 cottages. Access to the property was via a pedestrian gate from the unclassified county highway. The county highway roads through the village appear to be street lit with much of the lighting located on telegraph poles. It is considered that the lighting is sporadic at best. The property is bounded adjacent to the highway, which is finished in tarmac, with a random stone wall which has been constructed over an inner leaf of brickwork. The

tops of the piers and majority of the walls have been provided with a cement concrete, slightly exposed aggregate mortar. This finish has been used to the existing undisturbed walls and will be replicated to any new walls that are in need of repair.

## **Planning.**

The proposed access looks to achieve the requirements as set out in the National Regional Planning Guidance and Local Planning Policies in regard to:

- Respect the setting and context of the adjacent built development within the conservation area and the Grade 2 Listed Castle Building.
- Use materials which take influence from the locality.
- Create a safe and convenient access for the site, in the interest of highway safety.
- Provide sufficient parking spaces to accommodate the anticipated use.

## **Use and Proposals**

The proposals are to create a new shared pedestrian/vehicular access to the front of the property and provide safe, secure and satisfactory off-highway parking in the interest of highway safety. Previously none of the three cottages provided any off-highway parking whatsoever and this seems to be a main theme throughout the village. Ultimately this results in a high level of on-street parking, to the detriment of the free movements of vehicles through this proportion of the village. It is considered this area likely forms the older part of the village and is reflected by the relatively narrow carriageways, narrow footways or non-existent footways, which sees significant on-street parking. The on-street parking tends to result in the carriageway becoming heavily clustered and reduces the carriageway to effectively one lane only and passing available either adjacent to property entrances or side roads.

It is noteworthy that those properties that have driveways have a mix of tarmac, concrete and small aggregate surfacing. This would suggest that no one surface provides significant benefit to the character and setting of the area and therefore the proposals to use a more natural stone driveway will be appropriate for the building itself and the overall setting of the conservation area.

The county highway leading to the property varies in width but typically around 3.8m wide. This makes the road single track with passing in its junction bellmouth with Market Street and further up this steeply inclined road adjacent to a gated field entrance. The road is bounded by random stone walls on the rear of the highway carriageway, which further restricts the carriageway width whereby vehicles tend to travel down the centre of the road, which is borne out by the wear on the carriageway and the evident tyre tracking down the road. In the interest of highway safety and the safe and free movement of traffic through the village, we consider that if off-highway parking can be provided then this should be seen as a highway safety gain. Drawing CB-SL-200 shows the existing arrangements and how restrictive the highway carriageway is. The random stone walls appear to be individual and are largely finished with different patterns rather than having an aggregate exposed concrete dome, which exists to the walls around the application property. It is perhaps evident that over time boundary walls and surface areas have changed as materials have become more readily available, such as tarmac and whilst this provides a fairly bland appearance is nonetheless the predominant feature to roads, footpaths and driveways.

As mentioned above the proposals are to create suitable off-highway parking within the limited frontage to the property, whilst respecting the setting and construction of

the building and the surround area. Unfortunately it will not be possible to provide on plot turning, however this will not be any different to the existing properties in the immediate or wider area. We do however feel that the provision of off-street parking will not only enhance the property itself and provide a safe means of parking but will also relieve the burden of on-street parking on the county highway. Presently, the area fronting the building has been stoned and a portion of the existing wall removed to create a suitable entrance position through the boundary wall. The width of the entrance is 4.3m and is realistically the maximum opening that could be achieved. This enables the remaining random stone wall to be retained along the eastern boundary of the building, which requires some remediation and attention, including the pedestrian access along the frontage existing stone piers and iron railing and wrought iron gate to be refurbished and rehung. Currently these are in a very poor state of repair and if unattended will simply deteriorate at a faster rate to the point where they will become dangerous. Currently, there is little holding the existing iron railings and the gate has had to be removed as there is nothing to hang this from.

The proposals will include a pedestrian area fronting the property and a granite sett finish for the driveway. These will be in a grey finish but given the nature of these blocks will give an effect of a number of different grey shades. Furthermore, we consider that this surface finish will enhance the building and the setting over and above using a bland tarmac finish of which has been used to a number of other properties. The pathway will be provided in a light grey block paviour. We consider that these colour and materials will be sympathetic and complement the existing built form of the property and surrounding area. In addition to the driveway the existing stone piers dwarf walls will be re-built and the iron railings to be removed, blasted and re-finished to be inserted when the piers are re-built, and the original iron railed gate to be similarly refinished and rehung to the pedestrian access to the county highway. We are suggesting that the existing mortar capping to the retained wall on the eastern boundary (fronting the road) is removed and replaced with a concrete mortar mix with exposed aggregate similar to the existing boundary wall to the south. The new exposed aggregate render capping shall be provided as a half round feature and pyramidal capping on the pillars to match existing. These features for the render mix and texture shall meet the conservation officer requirements and will marry in with the existing finishes to the walls and capping thereof. It is proposed that the refuse bins for the property will be located in the small alley to the rear of the property and will not be located within the parked area.

Details of the proposals are indicated on drawing CB-PL-201 – Rev A – Site Layout Plan – Proposed. Furthermore, drawing CB-PL-203 – Rev A – indicates the proposed levels and surfacing drawing. Given the relatively steep gradient from the road to the front entrances we have suggested that a diminishing wall is provided from the northern pier of the vehicular access extending across to the front of the building and joining in with the demarcation between the pedestrian walkway and driveway shall be provided. This will be a typical height of 600mm adjacent to the eastern boundary and diminish to a similar level as the furthest entrance to the west of the building. Furthermore the provision of this additional wall will protect the ground to the perimeter to the southeast corner of the building. The ground here will not be reduced and the building will not be undermined. It is safe to say that this provision will assist in the protection of the built form and its foundations. This has been suggested as a light grey block paviour or tegular block and the driveway itself will be a granite stone finish to provide some character and remove the blandness of a conventional tarmac drive. We consider that this will similarly be sympathetic to its location and reflect Castle Building. The edge of the driveway along the opening will be provided with a precast concrete bullnose kerb to match the existing kerbing to the south of the property edging the highway. An ACO drainage channel will be

provided to the rear of the kerb which will prevent surface water run-off entering the highway.

Turning now to access visibility this will be slightly restricted due to the need to retain and rebuild the existing stone piers and wall and this has been indicated on the proposed levels drawing and further detailed on drawing CB-LS-202 – Longitudinal Section. This plan shows in detail the existing channel level of the county highway and visibility splays of 2.0m x 17m in either direction and although it is noted that these extend towards the centre of the carriageway in a northerly direction and slightly into the carriageway in a southerly direction due to property boundaries we consider they are appropriate and given the point that a driver will be sat at an 'x' distance of 2m into the access, visibility will be available behind the piers and over the walls such that sufficient visibility is available to ensure a safe and satisfactory access on this quiet county road. We consider that the benefits brought forward by providing off-street parking outweigh the slight deficiencies of the visibility splays and we further consider that the benefit would include the provision of satisfactory off-highway parking, which otherwise would lead to additional on-street parking which would further congest the roads through the village. We would point out that this road leads out of the village in a north westerly direction and connects to a further outlying road which has a direct link to what would be described as the main road into the village and therefore a more preferable route. In this regard therefore we do not consider that the road attracts a high level of movement, either vehicular or pedestrian.

The access has been designed and will be constructed in accordance with the principles of current national guidance and constraints of Manual for Streets 1 and 2.

The purpose of the access is to provide a separate autonomous access to the property. The access is designed and laid out for the provision of the potential of a single dwelling and provides minimum 3 parking spaces. Previously the dwelling had no parking facility whatsoever and it must be considered that there is a significant highway benefit, particularly in this location and area of the village where an opportunity is prevented to provide off-street parking, rather than further congest existing areas.

Given the above I do not see any specific highway or transport related issues why the access would not be acceptable in highway terms. In terms of the advice and guidance given in NPPF I see no reasons to prevent the development for the access as I do not consider there to be any significant or detrimental cumulative effects on the area or highway network. Moreover it is considered that the proposals will not be 'severe' and as such will not be contrary to NPPF. Furthermore, we consider that the works proposed will not only improve the safety of the perspective residents to the property, in a small part relieve the congestion in the village due to on-street parking, but will also complement and enhance the building, its character and setting within the conservation area.

The planning authority is respectfully requested to support this application and grant planning consent for the proposed access.