

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Replacement dwelling, Netherbank, Westhouse

This planning application follows on from planning approval reference 2021/22764/FUL. The clients are progressing well with their build, however, following Covid their requirements have changed which has resulted in the need for additional space to be provided immediately and a consideration of their long term requirements for their family needs.

Justification of Need

The proposal before you calls for the demolition of the existing dwelling known as Netherbank and its replacement with a traditional built property, constructed from local materials and utilising renewable energy sources to provide a family home for our clients and dependants. The proposal also asks for an extension to the domestic curtilage to provide a suitable level of parking and amenity space for the new dwelling.

Netherbank is a traditional bungalow, constructed approximately 70 years ago. The property is of brick construction with a pebbledash finish and a slated hipped roof. The property has been extended historically with additions to the east and west and a flat roofed structure to the south. The existing building has no thermal value and the building fabric has started to fail. There is also some evidence of structural movement between the main body of the house and the historical extensions.

The house is positioned uncomfortably close to the access lane to the west of the plot which makes the vehicular access tight and parking and turning within the site difficult. The property suffers from a lack of amenity space, with only a small garden area to the south and an area which accommodates fuel, storage etc to the north. The existing bungalow sits on a raised plateau, accessed via steps, making access very difficult for anyone less able bodied.

Considering the siting of the bungalow, its deteriorating fabric and the access issues, it became apparent during the design stage that a new build was the only way to permanently address these issues.

Approval has already been given to replace the dwelling. This application is borne out a change of circumstances whereby the clients need to provide independent, yet supported living space

The proposal takes on board these needs to ensure that the level of accommodation will be in place when it is needed.

Appraising the Context

The application site is a residential site set down a track off the A687. The site slopes gradually across its length – north / south, with the house set elevated at the northern end of the site. The access and parking area are set at a lower level (approximately 1m) to the south. The site is surrounded on three sides with agricultural land and an access track forms its western boundary. A layby has been historically created opposite the site entrance to allow egress in one movement. The site benefits from an open aspect to the east, south and west.

The site is bound by a stone wall to the north and westerly boundaries and post and wire stock proof fences to the east and south. The wall to the north runs off at an angle to the north west. The extent of the clients' ownership is now bound with post and wire stock proof fencing.

Proposal

The application calls for the demolition of the existing house and the construction of a family home with associated parking and amenity space for our clients and their three children, along with a space which provides independent, yet fully supported living accommodation [REDACTED]

The issues of the existing house have been carefully considered as part of the design solution and therefore the position and level of the property were fundamental. As a consequence, the building has moved further east into the plot allowing for parking and turning to be accommodated within the site boundary. The proposed dwelling has also been set at the natural lower level of the site to allow level access.

Our clients wished to create a traditional two storey dwelling, with garaging and utility spaces along with fully wheelchair accessible single storey ancillary accommodation. We have developed the design solution to be part double, part single storey single, which provides the level of accommodation, whilst keeping the scale and massing of the double storey dwelling to a minimum.

The proposed plan creates a courtyard entrance to the property. The 2 storey, main body of the house is to the south, with a single storey garage block running east to west. The ancillary accommodation is set to the north of the entrance running perpendicular to the garage block and forming a definite end to the built form.

The accommodation to the house includes a main entrance, kitchen / dining, living room, study, garage and utilitarian spaces on the ground floor and four bedrooms and bathrooms to the first floor. The ancillary accommodation is very much part of the family home yet provides a level of independence with its own entrance, though integral access is also provided. The proposal includes for an open plan kitchen / dining / living space, two bedrooms and a bathroom. The second bedroom provides accommodation [REDACTED] which will be necessary in the longer term.

We have taken the opportunity to set the ground floor level relative to the access and parking area to ensure full accessibility into the property, which, in turn, reduces the impact of the building in the natural landscape. The reduced floor level results in stone retaining walls to the north and east which form a natural enclosure to the parking and garden areas.

The property will be constructed to exceed thermal requirements and includes renewable energy sources to provide an efficient and sustainable home.

Scale

The size and scale of the proposed development is appropriate for a family home. The development of a second storey creates a well-balanced and proportioned property, which still nestles into the landscape. The courtyard plan form creates a sympathetic and very finite development area on the site. The building is of a simple form with traditional, stepping roof lines, which relate directly in proportion to the width of the plan. The proposed garden curtilage and parking area is again appropriate for a growing family.

Appearance

The proposals calls for a dwelling of appropriate scale and material finishes which will lift the existing area. The proposed design includes character and detail, which links with the local vernacular. The proposal includes for stone detail to the main public elevations and a render finish to the rear / set back elevations. The roofs will be of natural blue slate and the windows / doors will be slimline UPVC.

Landscaping

The proposed extension of the domestic curtilage will allow a suitable level of amenity for the property and outside space has been detailed as an integral part of the proposal.

A terrace and path are detailed to the building face with simple planting beds to align level changes. The eastern garden is limited to maintain an access track between the field to the north and south. The existing boundaries are to be retained and therefore, the impact upon the landscape is minimal.

The frontage includes an expanse of hard finish to form the vehicular access and parking areas. The existing hedge is to be maintained and extended to the roadside, softening the visual impact and providing screening.

Access

The vehicular access to the site will be significantly improved, with a wider opening and a generous amount of parking and turning areas within the site.

The dwelling will provide level access to all entrance doors and the main living accommodation is on one level. The new dwelling will comply with the requirements of building regulations part M4(2) and provide a lifetime home including standards for the approach to the dwellings from car parking spaces as well as requirements for the internal layout and details of the building. The ancillary accommodation will be fully accessible.

Conclusion

The application calls for approval of a well-considered and detailed new dwelling to suit a multi-generational family and the needs of the family for the long term. The building sits comfortably in the site and within its surroundings. Material finishes and high attention to detailing has created a dwelling that has interest and character and is appropriate to the context. The dwelling will complement and enhance its surroundings whilst having minimum impact upon the countryside.

We are of the opinion that this application is supported by the presumption in favour of sustainable development as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework. The proposed dwelling has been designed and detailed to ensure that the building sits appropriate within the context and is in character and keeping with the local distinctiveness of the area.

Yours sincerely

The Wright Design Partnership Ltd



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