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Design & Access Statement

Prepared for:	Mr Nick Pagett.
Address:	Abbotsford, The Bury, Thorverton, Devon, EX5 5NT.
Description of Proposed Works:	Renovation of Dwelling, incorporating door and window replacement/alterations, replacement porch, replacement of secondary area of roof, rendering work, construction of new rear decking and access stairs, installation of garden shed, and internal reconfigurations/improvements.

Existing Property Description:

Abbotsford is a Grade II listed dwelling dating from the C17 set in the northern portion of the historic core of Thorverton, Devon. The house is on a north-south orientation parallel to, but set back from, The Bury on the eastern side of the road. There is public parking in front, along with a neighbouring property that conceals the southern end of the house from the road (apart from at an acute angle when viewed from the north). Nearby, to the northwest at approx. 35m distance is the C15 Grade I listed Church. To the east is the garden area of Abbotsford, opening onto the stream that runs through the village. To north and south are other residential and commercial properties.

Pedestrian access to and from the property is only from the front door and a workshop door, also on the front elevation, at the southern end of the property. Access to the rear garden area is therefore circuitous around the northern end of the property.

The property itself has had various extensions and renovations over time, as detailed in the associated Heritage Statement, prepared by Adrienne Ridler-Lee MSc. It is constructed of local rubble stone, partially rendered, and with brick chimney stacks to north and east elevations. The principal roof is thatched in water reed, with a southern extension having a valley roof finished in rubber/resin.

The dwelling is Grade II listed, with Listing NGR: 1240593.

SS 90 SW THORVERTON THE BURY, Thorverton 8/129 Abbotsford 5.4.66 GV II

House, formerly probably Church house. C17, C20 renovations. Local stone rubble, the front elevation mostly colourwashed and rendered; thatched roof with plain ridge, gabled at ends; left end stack with brick shaft, rear lateral stack with brick shaft. Plan and Development: Single depth 3 room plan, present entrance to left of centre. The 1814 glebe map indicates that there were formerly external stone steps at the extreme left of the front leading to a first floor entrance. The massive fireplace to

the left end stack suggests that the left end room may have been used for baking church bread. Exterior: 2 storeys. Asymmetrical 4 window front with a front door to left of centre. First floor window right is a 4-light casement with glazing bars; the other windows have been re-glazed in the last 12 years but preserving earlier embrasures. Interior: Not inspected but said to have a massive fireplace to ground floor left with stone jambs and exposed beams in each ground floor room.

The existing building has a gross internal area (GIA) of 196.3sqm, and this is maintained by the proposal.

Planning History:

There have been 3 identifiable planning applications at the property. No associated documents are available via the Mid Devon website, and it is difficult to discern whether any but the most recent application actually were implemented. The three applications are as follows;

79/00105/LBC – Rebuilding of garage with greenhouse over – Approved. This doesn't appear to have come to fruition.

90/00404/LBC – Alterations and improvements –Approved. Difficult to identify and alterations and improvements potentially carried out in association with this approval.

98/01636/LBC – Internal alterations and fenestration and lean-to roof configuration – Approved. This does appear to have been implemented, most notably the roof.

Proposals:

This application seeks permission for various alterations and improvements to better the living accommodation to modern standards and for family living, whilst also revealing, preserving and enhancing existing historical fixtures and fittings. Exterior alterations to windows and render should also improve the aspect and be more suitable to the age and character of the building and locale.

Proposals for alteration include;

- Whole house window replacement. Per the heritage statement the windows all require repair or replacement. To the front, the proposal seeks to install single glazing, simple timber, flush fitting and side-opening casements with glazing bars. To the rear these would be slimline double glazing, but of matching framing, opening and glazing bar arrangement.
- Blocking up of bottom right ground floor window on front elevation, and installing a new kitchen window, lined up with bedroom window above, of same dimensions as dining room window to LHS.
- First floor window serving bedroom 3 (Top right on front elevation) to be altered to reflect its historic dimension, with head lowered to match the adjacent windows on the principal façade.
- Replacement of secondary valley roof over single storey workshop/garage at southern end with simple flat roof, parapeted at the rear and including a modest rooflight to improve natural daylight to proposed garden room and through to kitchen.
- Rendering of front elevation in lime, colourwashed as per existing.
- Removal of corrugation iron sheeting from southern gable and replacement with lime render.
- Replacement of existing modern trellis-sided timber frame lean-to porch with simple weathered oak gabled porch on existing stone plinths.
- Transforming of existing workshop/garaging into utility/shower room and a garden sitting room to the rear, replacing existing windows with door and taller window, and installing stable door and windows within the existing garage door opening.

- Partial removal of non-original wall between kitchen and existing passage/shower room, to give kitchen its original proportions and symmetry for the rear side of the room, and direct access to garden room.
- Forming of remaining portion of passage into boot area and pantry.
- Removal of modern partition and sliding doors in bedroom 1 to revert room to its original proportions.
- Blocking up of doorway from bedroom 1 into shower room, and reposition of modern wall partition between shower room and bedroom 2 to create a suitable size of family bathroom.
- Rehanging of door from landing to bedroom 5 to allow uninterrupted light from small window serving this room.
- Removal of door from bedroom 5 into bedroom 4, and formation of new lobby and storage cupboards, to improve access to bedroom 3.
- Blocking of door from bedroom 4 to shower room at southern end of first floor, and reopening of an existing doorway from bedroom 3 into shower room.
- Replacement of two small crudely framed and identifiably 'makeshift' windows with a single larger window.
- Carpet in dining room replaced with distressed oak boards; non-original parquet flooring (over original stone) in sitting room replaced with distressed oak boards; non-original brick hearth in sitting room fireplace replaced with stone to compliment the historic fabric.
- Internal doors, where not original, to be replaced with panelled oak doors throughout, with antique reclaimed brass knobs.
- Installation of rear decking area (6.4 x 3.9m), and associated external timber stair to provide access from dwelling to rear garden area via kitchen and garden room.
- Installation of modest timber garden shed to northern end of rear garden. Measuring 2.7 x 1.5m.
- UPVC gutting and downpipes replaced with reclaimed cast iron, powder coated black.
- Cement fill to be raked out and refilled with lime mortar.

Design and Layout:

As described in the Heritage Statement, the dwelling has undergone various alterations in its history, with rear extensions coming and going, various iterations of extension to the south of the original dwelling, the introduction of a passage between kitchen and workshop/garage, and subdivision of the first floor.

The proposal seeks to restore some flow and balance to the design and layout of the property, through mostly subtle and respectful alterations.

At ground floor level, the kitchen will better reflect its original proportions and function through the removal of half the passage and the shower room. Window alterations at the front both improve the natural lighting and ventilation of the kitchen, but also provides better balance to the fenestration, in better correspondence to the original openings. The removal of the non-original passage wall, and installation of proportionate and sympathetic exterior doors at the rear also enables appropriate flow and access between kitchen, garden and garden room. This again gives better natural light internally, but crucially provides access to the garden at the rear, which is essential for the dwelling to function as a family house.

The existing workshop/garage has identifiably been used partially as living accommodation, and the proposal seeks to formalise this as a modest and sympathetic extension of the living accommodation, providing a

garden room opening onto and looking out on the garden and stream beyond, along with the necessary utility and shower room facilities appropriate to modern living standards. By using this later addition to accommodate these facilities, intervention within the historic fabric of the dwelling for plumbing and services is avoided.

The important exterior doors from the kitchen and garden room gives direct access to the garden area, initially onto a decked area of 6.4 x 3.9m. This provides a modestly elevated outside space above the flood level of the stream, but also reduces the need for such a lengthy exterior stair down to garden level. As identified in the Heritage Statement, the rear of the building has previously undergone much change, including the construction and demolition of rear extensions over time. Whilst the proposed decking, supporting on a local stone plinth is a new element introduced to the property, its size is proportionate to the dwelling and crucially enhances Abbotsford identity as a family home, and therefore it is viewed that the introduction of this element only benefits the property.

On the first floor, modest alterations are proposed, principally to improve upon alterations made in the C20 to let the rooms as student accommodation. These changes reduce the need for bedrooms to be accessed through so many other rooms, whilst improving bathroom facilities without needing to convert bedrooms into alternative uses.

Access:

As noted, there is parking, though public, at the front of the property. Then pedestrian access into the dwelling is presently only available at the front, via the main entrance door and via the garage at the southern end of the building.

The proposal seeks to introduce secondary pedestrian access at the rear, both improving modern liveability of the property, but also providing secondary means of escape in the case of a fire.