

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT
FOR
8 WOOD END, HEBDEN BRIDGE, HX7 8HJ



Prepared for Ms K Walmsley

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By

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For and on behalf of CALDER CONSERVATION



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1.0 THE APPLICATION SITE

- 1.1 The application site address is 8 Wood End, Hebden Bridge, West Yorkshire, HX7 8HJ.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 This design and access statement is prepared in support of applications for Listed Building Consent and Planning Permission to:
 - 2.1.1 Demolish the redundant outside toilet.
 - 2.1.2 Repair the rear lightwell and upgrade existing handrails and guarding.
 - 2.1.3 Form a new door access at first-floor level on to the roof of the rear offshot to replace the existing dangerous stepped access from the lightwell.
 - 2.1.4 Install new external lighting to the rear of the property.
 - 2.1.5 Install new internal double doors between the kitchen and living room.
- 2.2 The statement is prepared in accordance with CABE guidance and details the use, amount, layout, scale, landscape and appearance of the proposed works and their impact on access to the dwelling.

3.0 CONTEXT AND POSITION

- 3.1 8 Wood End, Hebden Bridge is located on the A6033 and forms an inner terraced dwelling of a row of six terraced dwellings, listed at Grade II for their group value.
- 3.2 The cottage is an early nineteenth-century vernacular worker's cottage, likely originally a weaver's cottage.
- 3.3 Due to the topography of the site, and particular local conditions, the front access is elevated above road level and approached via a flight of steps and a balcony while the rear egress is into a retained lightwell.
- 3.4 The cottage is located in the Keighley Road Character Area of the Hebden Bridge Conservation Area.

4.0 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 4.1 A detailed history is provided in the Heritage Statement and Impact Assessment.
- 4.2 The cottage occupies a relatively small footprint, with a small original rear stone offshot and an outside toilet, likely added in the early C20.
- 4.3 The site boundary directly abuts the highway, as there is no footpath, but the dwelling is set back from the road as it is approached up a short flight of steps with raised balcony; while to the rear of the property the single storey offshot opens into a lightwell that gives access to an outside toilet. There is no garden associated with the dwelling but some of the owners of the cottages lease small areas of land directly behind the cottages which are accessed from the roofs of the offshots.
- 4.4 The cottage is two storeys plus a non-habitable room in the roof. It is constructed in the local vernacular style: Yorkshire stone slate roof laid in diminishing courses, timber gutters on metal brackets, flat-faced, regularly coursed stone walls and flat-faced stone window mullions containing timber windows.
- 4.5 The accommodation comprises on the ground floor: entrance porch, living room, kitchen, single-storey offshot; and on the first floor, accessed by stairs

from the kitchen: landing, bedroom and bathroom. A flight of stairs from the landing provides access to the roof space which comprises a single room, lit by roof lights to the front and rear roof slopes, which is not habitable by current standards. To the rear of the property there is a retained lightwell, accessed from the offshot, which contains a redundant outside toilet and steps up to the roof of the offshot, which provides access to the area of leased garden on the sloping rear banking.

- 4.6 The homeowner applied successfully for Listed Building Consent to replace the windows to the front elevation of the property in 2016 and has recently obtained Listed Building Consent to replace those to the rear elevation, along with replacing the front and rear external doors (23/00663/LBC). This current application is to make improvements to the dwelling which will make the limited outside space safer to access and more usable, to improve egress from the dwelling in the event of an emergency and to improve internal circulation and natural lighting.

5.0 BACKGROUND TO THE APPLICATION AND CURRENT SITUATION

- 5.1 In line with some of the other properties in the terraced row, the homeowner would like to make the limited outside space associated with this dwelling more functional and safer to access and use.
- 5.2 At the moment, approximately half of the small rear external lightwell is taken up by a redundant outside toilet. This structure is not an original element of the cottage, it is a poor quality, later addition; it limits natural daylight into the kitchen, affects the configuration of the dwelling's drainage, restricts the beneficial use of the lightwell, and attracts pests and vermin.
- 5.3 The owner wishes to carefully demolish the elements of the redundant structure, which do not form part of the party wall with the neighbouring property; make good and redecorate the walls forming the lightwell; cap off the redundant toilet and make good the lightwell floor surface where the structure has been removed.
- 5.4 Although the footprint of the lightwell will be unchanged it will nearly double the amount of usable space and will allow the lightwell to be used as a pleasant outside courtyard-type space, which will significantly improve the amenity of the dwelling.
- 5.5 Like others in the terraced row, the homeowner leases a small area of the rear banking behind the dwelling as a garden, this incorporates a line for drying laundry. This is at first-floor level due to the topography of the site. Currently, the only way to access this area is via a set of very steep, narrow and unevenly spaced ladder-type steps, which appear to date to the early C20. These rise from the lightwell up on to the roof of the rear offshot. This access is inherently unsafe but it is not possible to construct steps that would comply with current regulations due to the restrictive dimensions of the lightwell.
- 5.6 The proposal is therefore to construct a new door opening at first-floor level, off the existing landing, that would open directly on to the roof of the offshot. This will give safe access to the banking and also provide a safe means of escape to the rear of the dwelling in the event of a fire or other emergency, as currently the only means of escape to the rear of the dwelling is into the enclosed lightwell.
- 5.7 In order to accommodate a new opening, it will be necessary to widen the internal landing slightly by moving the position of the modern stud-partition wall that separates the bathroom from the landing by approximately 300mm and constructing internal steps to overcome the difference in levels between the first-

floor landing and the offshot roof. A bulkhead will need to be formed in the attic by raising the height of the ceiling joists in the area to accommodate the height of the new door head. This is the only position that a door opening can be located; other positions have been explored and discounted as the constraints of the site, including the attic staircase and the width of the offshot, limit the available options.

- 5.8 To improve safe use of, and access to, the external rear bank area, the proposals include the replacement of existing defective guarding to the top of the retaining wall with guarding of a height and design that complies with current Building Regulations and the replacement of the existing defective guarding to the open edge of the offshot with guarding of a height and design that complies with current Building Regulations.
- 5.9 The construction of the first-floor door will effectively render the existing unsafe steps redundant (except perhaps in an emergency situation which requires egress from the ground floor rooms to the rear of the dwelling). It is not, however, proposed to remove these steps as it is possible that this could cause damage to the rear retaining wall. It is therefore proposed to insert a new structural steel to support them, as their existing steel support is severely corroded; to reconfigure them, so that they take up less space in the lightwell; and to install guarding (non-compliant) to the open side, to offer a degree of protection in an emergency situation which is greater than currently exists.
- 5.10 The proposal also includes installing two new external lights. One of these would be a direct replacement for an existing external light that illuminates the lightwell, the other would be a new luminaire, installed adjacent to the new opening, to illuminate the new egress.
- 5.11 Internally, the proposal includes installing double doors between the kitchen and living room to improve circulation and natural daylight. The access between the two rooms has historically been altered. The section of wall adjacent to the current door opening is constructed of modern blockwork and so enlarging the opening would only involve the removal of modern blockwork infill.

6.0 PHOTOGRAPHS OF SITE SHOWING AFFECTED AREAS

6.1 Refer also to the accompanying drawings and details that form part of the application.



Rear lightwell of 8 Wood End

Taken from banking looking down into lightwell, redundant outside toilet on right hand side of image, the usable outside space is severely limited by the redundant toilet which now serves no useful purpose



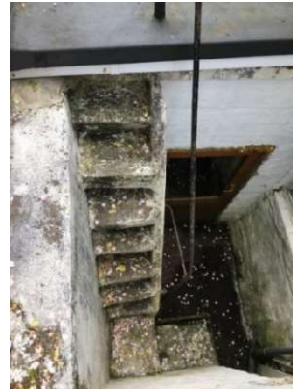
Redundant outside toilet from roof of offshot

Unlike the offshot, this structure is not constructed from stone and is not part of the original cottage construction, the junction with the rear of the cottage is awkward and the thin front wall is poor quality



View of the outside toilet from the lightwell

The structure creates a pinch point for drainage which is located in the corner of the lightwell within the footprint of the outside toilet



Existing steps from lightwell

These steps are the only means of access to the leased garden area at the rear of the dwelling and the only rear egress in an emergency



Existing steps

The steps are steep, slippery, uneven and narrow and the handrail is unsafe to use, they are constructed from concrete or possibly steel with a spray coating, removing them may damage the retaining wall



Rear elevation of 8 Wood End

Showing first-floor level where new door opening is proposed to the left-hand side of the bathroom windows to provide safe access to the rear of the dwelling



Proposed location for new door opening (external)
The proposed new door would open on to the flat roof of the single-storey offshot



Proposed location for new door opening (internal)
The proposed new door would open off the first-floor landing, which would be widened by moving the modern stud wall on the left



Stud partition wall separating bathroom from landing
The wall would be moved 300mm further into the bathroom to widen the existing landing to accommodate the proposed new door



Proposed style of new rear door
Patten 10 style hardwood door painted to match windows with toughened/laminated double glazing to maximise daylight into house



Existing guarding to the open edge of the offshot
Current guarding does not meet current safety standards



Existing guarding to the top of the retaining wall
Current guarding does not meet current safety standards



Existing external light



Proposed style of external lighting



Existing opening between living room and kitchen (seen from kitchen side) showing modern blockwork infill to left hand side of door



Proposed style of door between living room and kitchen

7.0 DESIGN ASSESSMENT

7.1 Use

7.1.1 The cottage will continue in use as a dwelling house.

7.2 Amount

7.2.1 The amount of accommodation will remain unchanged.

7.3 Layout

7.3.1 Externally, the layout of the lightwell to the rear of the dwelling will be changed by the removal of the redundant outside toilet and the reconfiguration of the existing steps. This will involve removing the front wall and roof slab of the toilet (all other walls will remain as they form the perimeter of the lightwell) and turning the bottom two steps through 90 degrees. The effect of this will be to create more usable outside space in the lightwell while the footprint will remain exactly the same.

7.3.2 Internally, the layout of the first-floor landing and bathroom will be slightly altered to accommodate a new door opening in the rear external wall at the end of the landing, to open on to the flat roof of the offshot. The timber stud partition wall, which separates the landing and the

bathroom will be moved 300mm further into the bathroom to widen the landing. Internal steps will be constructed to accommodate the change of level between the landing and the roof of the offshot and 1No ceiling joist will be raised to form a bulkhead over the door.

7.3.3 At ground-floor level, the single door between the living room and the kitchen will be replaced by a double door,

7.4 Scale

7.4.1 The scale of the property will be unchanged.

7.5 Landscape

7.5.1 The landscape will be unchanged.

7.6 Appearance

7.6.1 The appearance of the rear elevation will be altered by the installation of a new door at first-floor level. This will be located next to the three-light bathroom window (unfortunately it cannot be located within the existing blocked up fourth window opening, this has been explored but the internal layout does not lend itself to this location). The new door will be a Patten 10-style door to maximise natural light into the landing, which is currently entirely reliant on electric lighting, and to match the recently consented replacement door to the rear offshot. The style and finish of the door will match that of the windows so to all intents and purposes it will have the appearance of a full height window.

7.6.2 The appearance of the lightwell will be changed by the removal of the redundant outside toilet but, as it is below external ground level, the visual impact of this will be negligible.

8.0 ACCESS STATEMENT

8.1 Vehicular and Transport Links

8.1.1 The cottage is located on the A6033, a main thoroughfare through town.

8.1.2 The proposals will not increase the usage of the building and they will not affect the requirement for the amount of vehicle or bike parking or impact on vehicular or transport links.

8.2 Inclusive Access

8.2.1 The proposals will significantly improve safe access/egress/circulation around the dwelling, particularly with regard to emergency egress. The steep, narrow, uneven steps from the lightwell do not comply with current Building Regulations and cannot be made to comply. They were constructed at a time when utility overrode safety and while they do provide access to the rear garden and a means of escape in an emergency situation, they are inherently dangerous and have resulted in a number of minor accidents. The homeowner is concerned that using these steps, particularly to hang out laundry, which requires ascending and descending them carrying a laundry basket, is becoming increasingly difficult and dangerous and that in the near future access to the rear garden will become impossible. The proposal therefore seeks to address the issue of safe and inclusive access to the extent that the constraints of the site will permit.



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