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## **DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT**

### **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 This Design and Access Statement is submitted on behalf of our client Mr Howarth in support of applications for planning consent and Listed Building Consent. This is in connection with works to put the existing building back into residential use on the upper floors, alongside minor associated works and mixed use with the ground floor being a beauty salon and attached garage / car port being converted to use as part of the salon. The subject building is a Grade II listed property in Firgrove on the corner of Hartley Street and Rochdale Road.
- 1.2 The document is provided as a validation requirement consistent with Rochdale's Local Validation list. It should be relevant to note that the scheme is primarily concerned with the lawful use of the building and the extent of works to the building both internally and externally are very limited.
- 1.3 We would also note that there is no consequence in terms of access provisions or any change in appearance to the main building as viewed externally. Simply put, the implications for design and access considerations are very limited.
- 1.4 The listed building is currently vacant and is proposed for conversion to residential use on the upper floors and ground floor beauty salon subject to these applications being consented. The applicant has just acquired the building ownership, giving comfort that upon release of the consent that the building will be completed and put into occupation. That will provide a contribution to the Council's housing requirement in an accessible location in the urban area and offering business use, whilst ensuring that the listed building is put back into active and sustainable use.

## 2.0 **Location and Use**

### **Site Location and Use**

- 2.1 The proposal site is located on the junction of Rochdale Road and Hartley Street in the urban area of Firgrove.
- 2.2 The gable end of the building fronts Rochdale Road and forms the pavement edge. The front of the building faces on to Hartley Street set back behind a low stone wall. The site is located within the Development Limit with established residential uses to four sides of the property.
- 2.3 The subject building is a Grade II listed property which has been used since 1994 as a dental laboratory by the owner, until his decision to wind the business down in recent years. The use as dental laboratory required consent, partly because it involved change of use from a dwelling house. The listed building is now vacant and is now proposed for conversion back to residential use.

### **Flood Risk**

- 2.4 EA mapping indicates the site as being wholly within Flood Zone 1 and therefore low risk of fluvial flooding.

### **Planning History**

- 2.5 Our understanding is that the building was in use as a Conservative Club up until the 1980s and considering the history of those uses and the construction date then it seems extremely likely that the original use of the building would have been as a dwelling house before then being converted into use for a Conservative Club.
- 2.6 The building is understood to have been used as a Conservative Club and then converted to residential use after 1989. Following implementation, it was acquired in 1994 by the previous owner (Mr Roebuck) who used the building in connection with his dental laboratory business.
- 2.7 Further to planning approval being sought in July 1994, consent was issued (D30947) in September 1994 for building alterations and change of use to dental laboratory.
- 2.8 Review of the 1994 consent and archive material clarifies that the carport structure was in place by 1994, and we would envisage that its erection may have aligned with the residential consent achieved in 1989.
- 2.9 We are not aware of any other formal planning activity relating to the subject site since the building was put into use as a dental laboratory.

### **3.0 Proposed Development- Implications for Site, Scale and Layout**

- 3.1 The application proposes to secure the change of use of the building back to residential use and mixed use as a beauty salon, alongside minor external works that require no intervention to the main building and thus cannot create any irreversible impact to the heritage asset.
- 3.2 The main works will be to the garage / car port area with external materials and windows designed to be sympathetic and in keeping with the vernacular architecture of the existing main building.
- 3.3 Within the building, we envisage the need for minor alterations to existing walls by cutting door openings, constructing a new counter, and providing some new timber wall partitions, new decoration, and wall coverings and potentially the installation of replacement kitchen units. These would all be entirely consistent with commercial ground floor use and residential upper floors use and would reasonably fall within the thresholds of maintenance and replacement / general internal refurbishment works.

#### **Site Layout/Use**

- 3.4 The scope and premise of the application is outlined above. In terms of the effect of the development there are no implications to access and no changes to the main listed building as viewed externally as compared to what has already been built and previously approved.
- 3.5 These proposed physical works will have no effect upon the main building or use of the planning unit. The residential use could straightforwardly be had without the works, but their absence would result in a poorer residential environment for this and adjoining properties.
- 3.6 The building will provide a comfortable residential flat and ample room for a beauty salon on the ground floor with each enjoying private access with external yard space for refuse storage. The living space provides ample room for family living in a highly sustainable urban location.
- 3.7 The proposal brings the vacant heritage asset back into use through its reversion to its original use / mixed use. The works required to complete this are very minor and will serve to improve the setting of the heritage asset and provide positive contribution to street scene.
- 3.8 There is a considerable area of yard space to the north of the car port which has become unkempt and can straightforwardly accommodate a formal area for bin storage and a parking bay, also within which the property owner will be able to store cycles and other residential paraphernalia to reduce the potential for clutter.

## **Appearance**

- 3.9 As stated within Section 2, the key output from this process will be to secure the gainful use of the vacant listed building by reversion to the residential use that was approved in 1989 but would also have been the original use of the building when constructed in the latter part of the 18th century.
- 3.10 The change of use itself will not result in any amendment to the appearance of the main building as viewed externally. The associated works to the yard space will inevitably improve its appearance and functionality, set against the current position where there is a relatively large area that serves little function and become unkempt in a highly visible and prominent part of the site. Through active use and occupation of the property, we would envisage that the yard area would be better maintained and provide improvement to the street scene.
- 3.11 We do note however that in the context of a listed building, the internal appearance and form of the building can also have planning relevance. Whilst the extant 1994 approval does not specify any requirements for the internal finish of the building, it is the case that the original design intent was that there would be no major amendments to floorplan layouts or to remove any features of architectural interest or significance, particularly on the main upper floors.
- 3.12 The internal works to the buildings which are envisaged are decoration and floor coverings to the new residential flat, as well as replacement of kitchen units. The bathroom requires floor and wall coverings (tiling), and the kitchen will involve replacement of the fitted units and appliances (using existing electrical fittings). The internal roller shutter to the kitchen window will be removed and made good.
- 3.13 Numerous the rooms on the upper floors have exposed floorboards which could be utilised as a feature subject to some cosmetic improvement in appearance.
- 3.14 It is important to note that there is no evidence that these boarded floors are of original form or indeed retain original timbers, so the significance of those elements in heritage terms is very limited.

## **Landscaping**

- 3.15 The subject site has a hard landscaped area to the north of the car port and a small area of hard standing to the boundary to Hartley Street.
- 3.16 We have set out an intent to place bin storage areas within the yard space, but other than that no formal works are sought or envisaged. Details of the proposed timber bin stores are provided. As we have noted earlier, we would expect that upon formal occupation that the yard would be better maintained than is currently the case.

## **Local Context**

- 3.17 The building has been in a commercial use since 1994 but has been vacant since the current landowner retired and closed the business. It has been subject to general marketing, but no interest was secured, other than for transactions subject to it being used for housing.
- 3.18 The prospect of another commercial use (recognising that dental laboratory is very much a niche use) would have also required consent and it would have been inevitable that those alternate uses could have required greater intervention to the listed building and had more substantive consequential effects upon the residential amenity of neighbouring occupiers.
- 3.19, All the other buildings in the immediate context are residential in nature and the use as a dwelling will represent a reversion to the building's original use and mitigate the potential for any ongoing harm to the residential amenity of neighbour properties, the mixed use is coherent with the immediate vicinity as there are a sprinkling of commercial ground floor uses on the stone terraced buildings on Rochdale Road.

## **Security**

- 3.20 The building has been vacant for a considerable period and future occupation of it as a family home will deliver a scheme which provides good natural surveillance.
- 3.21 The prior commercial use of the building resulted in limited use at evenings and weekends, and it was deemed that internal shutters would be a deterrent to burglary and other crime. Through residential occupation there will be improved natural surveillance and we are pleased to confirm that the shutters will be removed (and the wall made good).
- 3.22 The introduction of subtle bin storage in the yard area will allow secured storage for bins and areas for cycles, thereby providing opportunities to use non-car modes of transport and user confidence.

## **Regeneration**

- 3.23 The proposed scheme will deliver a new home and put a listed building back into active use. The revitalisation of a listed building and the delivery of new homes is entirely consistent with the objectives of the Local Plan and national policy guidance.

#### **4 Access (vehicle and pedestrian movement)**

- 4.1 The development proposed will result in no change to either of the site layout or any associated works to the adopted highway.

##### **Parking**

- 4.2 The site provides a car port that can house two cars; however, this is to be converted to use with the beauty salon, on street parking is comfortable as the road is a dead end and very low traffic, the yard area can house a parking bay.

##### **Accessibility**

- 4.3 The application is within the urban area and has bus stops in either direction within 150m of the site, which provide high frequency links to key centres for employment and town centre facilities. This is an accessible location that would be acceptable in transport terms.

##### **Summary**

- 4.4 In practice, the proposal will create no adverse impact upon the operation of the development. This is an accessible site that has appropriate facilities for car parking and cycle parking are retained, the car port will be lost which is the loss of one space and the only place to park off road would be the yard to the side, justification is put forward in support that the side street is a dead end and parking is safe and comfortable without interruption to the main road network, as such, there is no major increase of any significant adverse impact upon the operation of the highway network that would warrant refusal.

#### **5.0 Conclusion**

- 5.1 The development proposals seek consent for the change of use of the building back to family housing and maintaining a ground floor commercial use with the beauty salon with minimal / minor associated works to improve enjoyment of the building and retain its main heritage outlook.
- 5.2 Should it be considered in determination of the application for listed building consent, that there could be some minor degree of harm to the significance of the listed building- then the public benefit is the long-term preservation & sympathetic maintenance of the Grade II listed building with viable residential family use of the building. In addition, this would provide a valuable contribution to housing supply and best use of previously developed land.

- 5.3 As such, it is entirely robust to conclude that the impacts will be limited in scale and should be set against other public benefits which arise from the scheme, by consequence of which the scheme should be supported. As such, there is no conflict with relevant national or Development Plan policy requirements in relation to the preservation of heritage assets.