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DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

FOR

**ALTERATIONS TO THE EXISTING DWELLING AND
CONVERSION OF OUTBUILDING INTO A
ONE-BEDROOM DWELLING**

AT

**18 SACKVILLE STREET, READING,
BERKSHIRE, RG1 1NT**

Date: 22nd November 2017
Ref: TCG 6579 - design statement

INTRODUCTION

This Design and Access Statement accompanies a planning application submitted to Reading Borough Council to undertake development works at 18 Sackville Street, Reading, Berkshire, RG1 1NT. To briefly summarise, the proposals consist of removal of a previous ad-hoc extension to the rear of 18 Sackville Street which currently provides a bathroom, and undertaking internal alterations to provide an improved bathroom layout within the envelope of the original building. Also to undertake the refurbishment and conversion of the existing detached bakehouse building to provide a 1-bedroom dwelling.

THE EXISTING SITE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

No. 18 Sackville Street is an end terrace two storey dwelling on the south side of Sackville Street. Originally understood to have provided a shop and bakery, the house currently provides a family dwelling over two floors in a two plus one bedroom arrangement. The site is unusual as it contains a courtyard with pedestrian and vehicular gates onto Sackville Street. The site also benefits from a detached outbuilding, understood to have originally housed the bakery oven, but which is currently unused.

In terms of the existing build environment surrounding the site, the house is attached to a terrace of similar dwellings to the east, and the Grey Friars Centre closely abuts the plot to the south west. Opposite the site on the northern side of Sackville Street, original Victorian terrace dwellings of a slightly larger two and a half storey stature are the predominant feature, whilst the western end of Sackville Street features a more recent three and four storey development of apartments, beyond which is the Inner Distribution Road.

The site is very much an urban location and as such benefits from excellent public transport facilities.

PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

Whilst the house is currently occupied, the existing single storey bathroom element to the rear is reaching the end of its useful life, and beyond economic repair. The alteration works are proposed in order to address this, and also to allow the opportunity to undertake other general maintenance items.

With regard to the bakery outbuilding, this is currently unused and suffering from the effects of the weather. However, it has great potential to provide a one bedroom dwelling in a sought after central location.

THE PROPOSALS

The application proposals consist of the demolition of the existing single storey bathroom element, and infill of the existing door opening. Then internal alterations to the ground floor to remove the existing internal wall between the kitchen and dining room allowing the bathroom to relocate to within the footprint of the original building alongside an open plan kitchen/dining room. Also, given the impractical two plus one bedroom arrangement, the works also include the provision of a bathroom at first floor level within the third bedroom.

With regard to the outbuilding, the proposed alteration works consist of the removal of the existing redundant chimney and bakery oven, closing up the existing redundant openings and forming appropriate new door and window openings. Internally, the layout provides an open plan kitchen/living area at ground floor level and a bedroom with en-suite shower room at first floor level.

AMENITY

The proposed arrangement is for both units to share the existing courtyard area, and although this abuts the street frontage, the presence of 1.8m close boarded timber fencing serves to ensure privacy.

The close proximity of the two buildings is recognised, along with the need to provide reasonable privacy to the occupants of both buildings. To expand, the bathroom windows to No. 18 and the proposed en-suite window to the outbuilding are in close proximity, however these are not habitable rooms and all windows will be glazed with obscure glass.

In terms of the habitable room arrangement, the proximity of the kitchen/dining room window to No. 18 and the living room window to the outbuilding is noted at ground floor level, and a similar arrangement between bedrooms at first floor level. It is proposed to install vertical blinds to the outbuilding living room and bedroom windows, which represent an effective way of preventing loss of privacy whilst also allowing good day light. Furthermore the respective angle of view between the windows is relatively slim, and the internal arrangement of the outbuilding has intentionally been designed to ensure that any sight is towards the staircase area, rather than the main living areas. Therefore, whilst the snug nature of the site is recognised, the proposals have been prepared with due regard to occupant privacy.

TRANSPORT

The existing site benefits from double gates suitable for vehicular access, and these are proposed to remain, although it is considered doubtful whether prospective occupants would be car owners.

As mentioned previously, the town centre location of the site ensures excellent public transport links with Reading train station and bus routes being within easy walking distance. The scheme proposals also feature the provision of a cycle storage facility within the site, thereby encouraging occupants to use alternative transport methods.

REFUSE COLLECTION

The proposed site plan indicates the provision of standard residential wheelie bins for both the existing house and proposed outbuilding dwelling within the existing courtyard area. These can be presented for collection on the pavement in the normal way.

COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL)

The net gain of one dwelling is noted, and the application is accompanied by the appropriate CIL form. Any forthcoming liability notice will be actioned in due course.

CONCLUSION

The scheme is considered to represent an appropriate improvement to an existing dwelling, plus the windfall creation of an affordable dwelling by way of the conversion of an established outbuilding. The application is considered to be Planning Policy compliant in terms of both location and design provisions, and I therefore respectfully request the application be considered favourably.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Tony Grover'.

Tony Grover
DipSurv MRICS MCABE
BDS Surveyors Ltd