

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT FOR PROPOSED ALTERATIONS**BECK HALL, PRIESTMANS LANE, THORNTON le DALE**

Mr & Mrs Webb bought the property in 2006 and became aware the internal layout particularly around the rear entrance and kitchen was not ideal. The adjoining cottage which had been used for rental purposes was empty and effectively redundant. The views from the rear of the house were wholly obstructed by a mismatch of low quality outbuildings behind which the garden sloped steeply. They decided not to proceed with alterations until they had occupied the property for some time to gain an understanding of what was good and bad about the internal layout. They now believe they can objectively identify constructive improvements which result in a good internal layout, ensure an effective use of available space, improved rear amenities giving views towards the garden and importantly, significantly improve the rear elevation from an architectural point of view.

The current property is a large period dwelling with impressive living accommodation apart from the kitchen area where there is an absence of a useable utility room and ground floor toilet. The cottage was originally a pigsty with first floor storage, access to which was via an external staircase (now removed). This agricultural use was intended to serve the main house. It was converted a number of years ago and sold off before being brought back into single ownership. The outbuildings to the rear are located in close proximity to the house creating a narrow dingy yard area. There are a mixture of old and new outbuildings with both stone and brickwork walls. The outbuildings immediately opposite the kitchen area are narrow and as far as we are able to determine were built in the 1940s. This section effectively blocks light and views up the steeply sloping garden and enclosed yard.

The existing utility area is set to the rear at a higher level, access being via a steep narrow flight of stairs and as such does not provide a practical utility area.

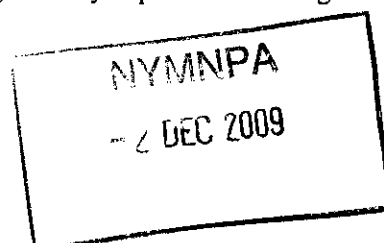
After four years of occupation Mr & Mrs Webb have concluded that in order to create a useable functioning layout providing accommodation in keeping with the remainder of the property the following alterations need to be considered :

1. Demolition of two storey outbuilding.
2. Re-modelling gardens and terracing.
3. Form an enlarged kitchen with improved glazing.
4. Reconstruct rear entrance area and incorporate ground floor toilet.
5. Form utility area within the ground floor of the cottage.
6. Form first floor granny flat.
7. Demolish the high level utility and staircase.

The absence of light and the enclosed rear yard is due to the proximity of the two small 1940s outbuildings that are now redundant and provide no benefit to the property nor visually to its appearance. Their demolition, however, opens up the rear of the property and allows the formation of an extended terrace and garden terracing creating improved amenities to the house adjacent to the important rear entrance and provides an outlook to the kitchen.

The current kitchen, the absence of a useable utility and ground floor toilet has proved to be a major problem along with the poorly constructed rear entrance porch. Remodelling the ground floor of the cottage creates an accessible utility room and an enlarged kitchen with breakfast area creating essential accommodation of appropriate size and scale for a property of this size. In so doing it brings back the cottage into the main dwelling and results in a good effective use of it.

The alterations include the partial removal of the wall between the existing kitchen and cottage along with its internal partitions. None of these features are identified within the Listing as architecturally important. Enlarged arched rear windows and rear entrance built of stone reproduces a rural, agricultural feel to that part of the building which was the original use of it. It also provides uninterrupted views of the garden and significantly improved natural light to the kitchen, breakfast and rear entrance.



The existing utility room is not used because of the steep narrow flight of stairs to gain access to it. The area is relatively modern and of no architectural merit and as such it is proposed to demolish it up to the original wall of the property. This again adds to the improved open feel to the rear garden. A new ground floor toilet is proposed to be incorporated into the existing boiler area providing an essential amenity for a property of this size.

Mr & Mrs Webb have need of an area which could be used as a granny flat. This area has been created at first floor level where the cottage lightweight partitions have been removed along with a section of the wall between the house and the cottage. These alterations allow the creation of a living area, bedroom and bathroom. This accommodation is formed within the area which is not specifically identified in the Listing.

Access to the building is via the main front entrance door and the new rear entrance. It is not proposed to alter the front entrance which forms part of the main Listed building. The rear area is currently narrow and uninviting. The proposed demolition of outbuildings and construction of terrace and terracing creates an open easily accessible entrance into the building which would be set to create a level disabled access into the property. The enlargement of the terrace also creates an area suitable for disabled use.

The vehicular entrance is unnecessarily narrow due to a short stub wall which is not bonded to the end of the building. This wall was added after the external staircase as described earlier was removed. The vehicular entrance also forms part of the rear pedestrian access. The demolition of the stub wall will create a wide access to the garage for vehicular entrance and also provide improved off road parking for an additional vehicle in an area where roadside parking is prohibited.

In summary, the design of the proposals has been carefully thought out over four years and addresses the shortcomings of the internal layout and rear area. The demolition is restricted to the two small unused outbuildings and the high level utility room, all of which are relatively modern and provide no direct benefit to the building. The creation of a utility room within the cottage, enlarged kitchen and breakfast facility and first floor granny flat makes maximum and effective use of existing space. The creation of an enlarged terrace area and terracing provides an open aspect up to the rear garden and provides substantially improved natural light to the kitchen.

