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DESIGN, ACCESS & HERITAGE STATEMENT

PLANNING/LISTED BUILDING APPLICATION FOR ALTERATIONS TO LEONARD HOUSE, LEONARD STREET LEEK.



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INTRODUCTION / CONTEXT

This design and access statement is to support the application for internal and external alterations to the former Police Station Stable Block, which has a grade 2 status under the English Heritage listing register along with the former Police Station and the former Superintendents house all occupying the curtilage and sharing the courtyard beyond the roadside arch.

The former stable block has undergone some changes during its history. It was converted into garages when cars were used instead of horses with alterations to the frontage. More recently in August 2000 listed building consent was granted to convert the (now garage block) into meeting rooms and offices for use by the Britannia Staff Union (old ref: 00/00751/LBC). An extension was also granted at the time for a lean-to in the side to create an entrance lobby and a small kitchen/beverage preparation area.

The building has been tenanted for office for a number of years recently before being sold to the applicant earlier this year.



PROPOSAL

From a planning perspective the proposal is quite modest. A stand off style (non-illuminated) sign to be placed above the window with the proprietors business name, and the installation of a roof light to the lean-to kitchen roof on the side of the property. Also the replacement of the existing CCTV camera on the mini gables. There are internal alterations also proposed which would not require planning permission, such as insulation to the exterior walls and the introduction of secondary glazing to the existing single glazed timber framed windows. At some point in its history interior dividing walls have been erected, these would have electric trunking 'dado' rails running around the room with power and comms connections for computers, phones etc.

USE & AMOUNT

The use of the building shall remain office space use by the applicant for their accountancy practice with the existing amenity rooms.

LAYOUT

The approved original permission had an open plan ground floor, with timber studs and plaster boarded walls being added at a later date creating two office spaces. This layout and the layout of the structure shall remain unaffected.

SCALE

There are no extensions or structural alterations proposed for the building, so the scale of the property will remain unaffected.

LANDSCAPING

There are no proposals to alter the landscape in the curtilage, however a new main power supply shall be brought from the supply within Leonard Street under the arch into the courtyard to the building below ground and under the suspended floor into the building, resulting in some scarring to the tarmac finish in the courtyard area where the trench is back filled and made good

APPEARANCE

There are no proposals to alter the overall appearance of the building.

ACCESS

There are no proposals to alter the access to the building or carpark, It has a small tarmac courtyard with parking for around 6-7 vehicles with ownership and shared between the buildings and spaces allocated for the occupants use. .

HERITAGE STATEMENT

A description of the heritage asset, its history and setting.

The building forms one of three grade II listed buildings sharing the same courtyard, all designed by William and Larner Sugden, dated 1891. The cluster comprises of the former Leek Police Station, and the Superintendents house, with the subject building which is the former stable block for the Police horses. The decorated boundary wall with the archway completed the listing.

The listed entry number is 1268599a and was first listed in 11 November 1971, with an amendment in 14 October 1996.

Details of the listing:

SJ9856SE LEONARD STREET 611-1/7/70 (West side) 11/11/71 Police Station and Superintendent's House including stables and boundary wall (Formerly Listed as: LEONARD STREET County Police Station)

GV II

Police station, superintendent's house, stables and boundary walls. Disused at time of inspection. Dated 1891. By William Sugden and William Larner Sugden. Brick with stone dressings and plain-tiled roof. EXTERIOR: 2 storeys, main block and flanking recessed wings. Main block a 6-window range with central entrance in full-height concave arched recess. Paired doors in stone architrave with date and title in entablature. Pilasters each side ornamented with Staffordshire knots, and with feathers as capitals. County arms above. Round-arched window with circular leaded glazing fills the upper part of the arched recess. Flanking windows have stone architraves, and flat lintels to ground floor (15-pane sashes); round-arched windows above (12-pane sashes). Turrets corbelled out above the ground floor at each side. End wall and central stacks. Moulded stone cornice and string course over ground-floor windows. Stressed stone quoins to ground floor. Left-hand wing recessed: Two 15-pane sash windows to ground floor, 2 round arched windows above. Steps to basement storey behind heavy cast-iron area railings. Right-hand wing formerly the sergeant's house: doorway to right with canopy porch and overlight above the porch. Canted bay window with Ipswich glazing, and similar window above. The police station is linked to the superintendent's house to the S by walls and entrance gates to yard: curved wall flanks the entrance gates, with round-arched main gate and side entries separated by brick pilasters surmounted by heavy ball finials. Heavy tooled stone banding, stone copings, all somewhat exaggerated. Superintendent's House: 2-storeyed, 3-window range with advanced central bay housing entrance. Shouldered wood architrave with bolection moulded cornice continuing across side lights. 20-pane sash window above, with moulded cill band and cornice. Tympanum over window with low-relief stone carved county arms. Central block terminates as low tower with swept

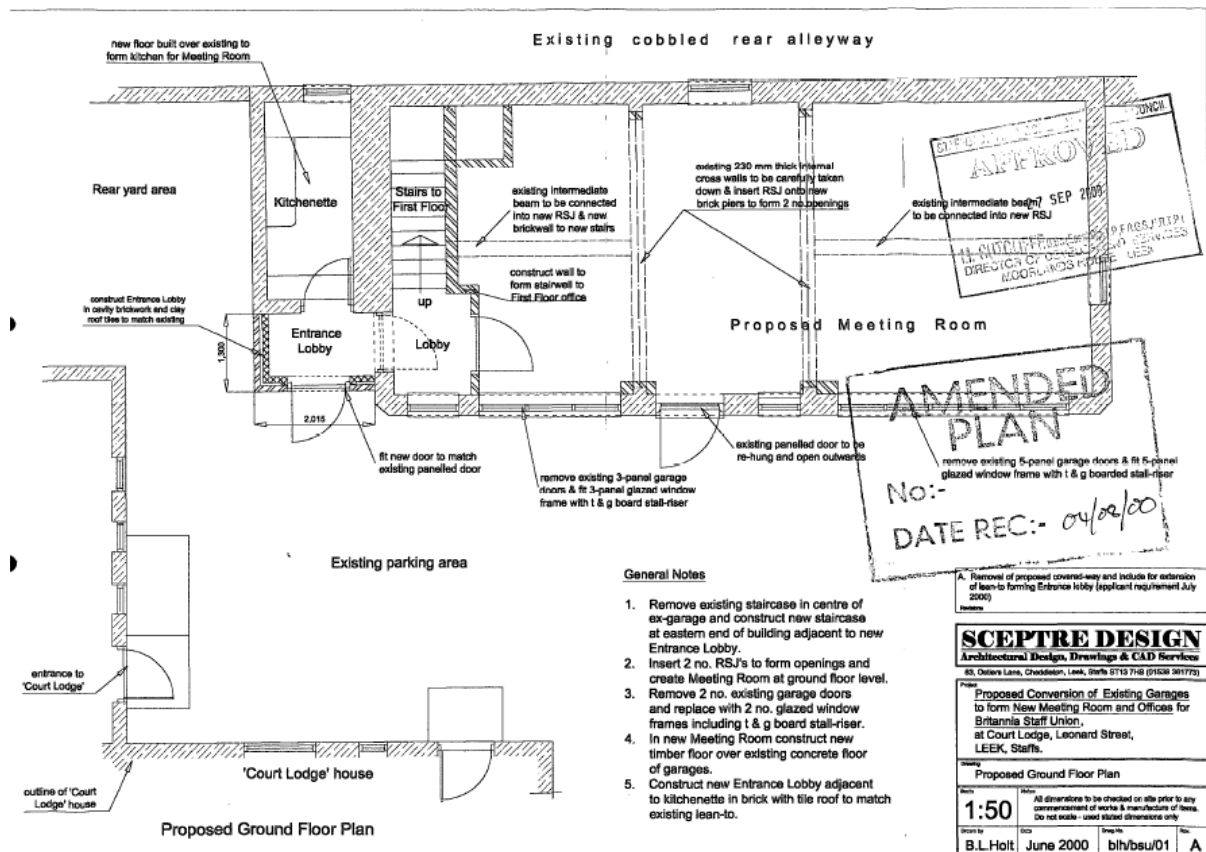
parapet and pyramidal roof. Flanking shallow segmental bow windows to ground floor, with tripartite sashes. 16-pane sash windows in shallow projecting panels to first floor with steep gables with moulded wood cornice forming pediments above. Axial and rear stacks, enriched with moulding and tile hanging.

INTERIOR: not inspected. SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: the buildings are enclosed in a walled courtyard to the rear, with stabling and other ancillary buildings.

It remained in use as the police house until 1987 because the main building became unsuitable for modern policing as the number of police vehicles grew and police numbers increased, and the police station moved to new premises on Fountain Street. The former superintendent's house became a single residential dwelling from 1987 until 1996, when it was bought by Britannia Staff Union and had a change of use from residential to office accommodation.

The original stables had been converted into garaging for the police vehicles recently in August 2000 listed building consent was granted to convert the (now garage block) into meeting rooms and offices for use also by the Britannia Staff Union, which had the layout of a large meeting room downstairs and office accommodation on the first floor. (old ref: 00/00751/LBC).

See the approved plan below:



An assessment of significance

The former stable block, whilst being within the curtilage of the Police house and station, has much less historic and architectural significance than those on either side, which are notable for their distinct heritage and typical Sudgen design features. While the neighboring structures boast rich histories and intricate designs, this building appears more utilitarian and lacks the same degree of character or cultural value. The building bears the scars of mis-matched brickwork where the original stable doors may have been altered to create garage doors, and again altered for the windows and personnel doors which wouldn't have been required certainly for the stabling of horses. This scarring depicts the evolution of the building during its history. It may be reasonable to describe the building as being overshadowed by its neighbours due to the lack of architectural features.

An explanation of the design concept for the proposed development

The proposal is considered to be relatively minor alterations to necessary to upgrade the now office space to a functional, warm environment befitting an accountants office for the staff and client meetings.

Since the original building was purely utilitarian without decorative plaster coving, etc and a bare brick inside finish, the conversion of the Police garage to a meeting room / office in 2000-2002 has been drylined internally with a plasterboard lining to the walls on 25mm thick timber battens with a bitumen impregnated tanking hessian type membrane (similar to a roof sarking membrane) against the inside face of the external brick wall with a small air gap between brick and membrane.

Increasing energy costs and the Government continual drive to improve thermal performance and reduce carbon emissions with a target of to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 100% by 2050, compared to 1990 levels. This legally binding target is part of the Climate Change Act 2008, which requires the UK to take action on climate change.

There is no insulation added to the during the original conversion of the property. The proposal would be retrofit high efficiency insulation adhesive fixed PIR type insulation aluminium foil faced panels up to 75mm thick to the existing plasterboard surface (leaving the current drylining treatment in situ) and re-surfacing this with a layer of plasterboard to provide the thermal requirement to satisfy the building inspector and achieve the comfort levels in the building without exceeding heating requirement. The original conversion used simple painted bullnosed architraves and skirting boards through out, so the current joinery work shall be removed and replaced on the new plasterboard surface as appropriate. This approach is considered to have zero impact of the original brick fabric of the building. The current tanking system shall protect the internal finishes from migrating moisture and the brick façade shall remain breathable to atmosphere.

The electrical installation for the office fitout shall be surface mounted to the new plasterboard within proprietary dado style trunking approximately 1.0m above the floor level, with internal compartments to separate data cables from power. This will allow for flexibility as found in a modern office to fix plug and data socket as required for computers, printers and telephony. The light switching may also be included on the dado trunking so switching can be easily operated from a sitting position, in the event a staff member is a wheelchair user.

The single glazed windows throughout shall have a discreet internal aluminium framed secondary glazing system, having vertical or horizontal sliders to suit the existing fenestration to ensure that rapid ventilation through the existing window, whilst aligning with the existing transom and/or mullions to reduce the impact as viewed externally but to provide an enhanced thermal performance and reduce draughts.

The ground floor ceiling is currently a suspended grid with drop in type tiles, similar to those found in most office spaces. This will be retained with replacement tiles as required, also for new lighting panels where required to be fitted with smoke detectors etc, and again having little impact of the original structure or the floor/ceiling installed during the original conversion.

The upper floor has a series of Velux rooflights fitted. It is proposed to fit one these type 980mm x 550mm wide in the relatively modern lean to roof over the kitchen area. Despite there being a small change in height between the annex area and the rear yard of the former police house, there shall be no privacy issues created with this proposal. The rooflight itself shall be fitted with a low profile flashing kit to ensure the surface of the rooflight is flush with the tile surface.

The power supply to the 'annex' was originally supplied from the police house and metered accordingly, which was fine when the Britannia staff union owned both buildings. It is less desirable now. There is a proposal for Western Power to bring a new supply to the building under the yard from the pavement outside, brought through the wall below ground and to raise through the suspended floor into the office space to a new consumer unit, meters and supply fuse. This approach will ensure that there are no additional external wires on the surface of the building.

A signboard approximately 3mm thickness aluminium composite board (Usually a sheet of polyethylene sandwiched between two sheets of aluminium to provide excellent stiffness/rigidity and durability) would be proposed to be fixed to the front wall of the office space using stainless steel 6no standoff fixings approximately 12mmØ to minimise the mechanical disturbance to the fabric of the building, and can be easily reversed. The standoffs shall as the name implies provide approximately 25mm airgap behind the sign and the brickwork, so there shall be no scarring to the brickwork with flexible sealant and timber trims as a traditional signboard above a shop front maybe fixed. The sign shall not be illuminated.

Small black circular type security type cameras shall be fitted to the small gables beside the circular windows to provide security to the premises with CCTV in accordance with the accountants insurance and security requirements for the profession. The cameras shall be high resolution, high definition for low light, with an LED backlight within the front of the camera to illuminate when movement is picked up in the dark.

The impact on the Heritage Asset and Conservation area

The proposed alterations to the premises shall have very little or no impact on the heritage asset. In the unlikely event that the office is no longer required as office space, the internal boards etc could be easily stripped back to the original fabric of the building. The external fixtures and fittings proposed shall be relatively discrete whilst providing the requirements to ensure the office can function in the modern world.