Design and Access Statement

Address: 323 Slaithwaite Road, Thornhill Lees, Dewsbury, WF12 0LL
Retrospective Planning Application: New Vehicular Access, Dropped Kerb, Boundary Fencing and Gates
Prepared by: Jennings Design Ltd

1. Introduction

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared in support of a retrospective planning application for the retention of a new vehicular access incorporating a dropped kerb, driveway, boundary fencing and access gates at 323 Slaithwaite Road, Thornhill Lees, Dewsbury.

The property was previously vacant and boarded up for an extended period. During this time it became vulnerable to anti-social behaviour, trespass and attempted unauthorised access. Following occupation by a young family, measures were implemented to improve the security and functionality of the property whilst enhancing the safety of residents and visitors.

The development comprises:

- Creation of a vehicular driveway within the front curtilage.
- Formation of a dropped kerb to enable off-street parking.
- Installation of boundary fencing.
- Installation of access gates.

The works are modest in scale and relate solely to the residential enjoyment, security and safe use of the dwelling.

2. Site Context

The property occupies a prominent position on Slaithwaite Road, a busy urban route carrying significant levels of vehicle and pedestrian traffic.

Prior to the development, the front garden was open and exposed to the public realm. The property's vacancy and deteriorated condition made it particularly susceptible to unwanted access and anti-social behaviour. The open nature of the frontage meant individuals could freely view and access the garden area directly from the pavement.

Following occupation by a family with young children, it became necessary to provide appropriate boundary treatment and secure access arrangements commensurate with normal expectations of privacy, security and residential amenity.

3. Design Principles

Boundary Fencing and Gates

The fencing and gates have been installed to create a clearly defined residential boundary and to provide a reasonable level of security and privacy for the occupiers.

The design responds directly to the site's recent history. Having previously stood empty and boarded up, the property attracted unwanted attention and experienced incidents associated with anti-social behaviour. The boundary treatment therefore serves an important practical function by:

- Discouraging trespass and opportunistic access.
- Providing a secure environment for a young family.
- Protecting children using the garden area.
- Preventing direct access from the public highway.
- Reducing opportunities for anti-social behaviour.

The fencing also improves residential privacy. Prior to its installation, occupants and garden users were fully visible from the public pavement and from stationary traffic queuing on Slaithwaite Road. The enclosure helps create a private family environment and reduces overlooking from passers-by without causing unacceptable harm to the character of the street scene.

Vehicular Access and Dropped Kerb

The creation of the driveway and dropped kerb provides dedicated off-street parking for the occupiers. Prior to these works, vehicles associated with the property would have been required to park on-street along a busy section of highway. The provision of off-street parking reduces pressure on the public highway and removes the need for regular on-street parking directly outside the dwelling.

The vehicular access has been designed to allow vehicles to enter and leave the property safely. Importantly, the arrangement does not obstruct pedestrian movements or compromise visibility for users of the nearby pedestrian refuge island.

The access arrangement can deliver several highway safety benefits:

- Reduces dependence on on-street parking on a busy road.
- Minimises vehicle obstruction along the carriageway.
- Maintains visibility for pedestrians crossing in the vicinity.
- Allows vehicles to park clear of the highway.
- Improves convenience and safety for residents entering and leaving the property.

The dropped kerb formalises vehicle access in a controlled manner and represents a safer arrangement than informal parking practices associated with the previous layout.

4. Impact on the Street Scene

The development remains clearly domestic in nature and is proportionate to the property.

Boundary fencing and gates are common features within residential areas and the works do not introduce any unusual design elements or incompatible materials. The development does not alter the use of the property and does not result in any significant adverse impact upon neighbouring occupiers or the wider character of the area.

The improvements have assisted in bringing a previously vacant and insecure property back into active residential use and have contributed positively to its ongoing maintenance and occupation.

5. Access

The development improves accessibility and usability of the property for occupants and visitors.

The new driveway provides convenient access to off-street parking, reducing the need to cross the busy highway from on-street parking locations. The secure gated access helps control entry to the property while maintaining safe pedestrian access.

The works do not prevent use of the public footway and retain safe pedestrian movement along Slaithwaite Road.

6. Conclusion

The retrospective works have been undertaken to provide a safe, secure and functional family home following a prolonged period during which the property stood vacant and was vulnerable to anti-social behaviour and unauthorised access.

The boundary fencing and gates are justified by the need to improve security, safeguard a young family's privacy and prevent direct access into the garden from the public highway. The driveway and dropped kerb provide a practical off-street parking solution that reduces reliance on parking along a busy road and does not adversely affect pedestrian safety or visibility.

Overall, the development represents a proportionate and reasonable enhancement to the property which supports residential amenity, security and highway safety, and it is respectfully requested that planning permission be granted.