

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Rear Courtyard, Outdoor Seating and Mobile Catering Trailer
The Pour House, 28A St John's Street, Devizes, Wiltshire, SN10 1BN

Applicant: Sarah Watts Ltd, trading as The Pour House

Site address: 28A St John's Street, Devizes, Wiltshire, SN10 1BN

1. Introduction

This Design and Access Statement is submitted voluntarily alongside the application for the regularisation of the existing courtyard seating and the future siting and operation of a mobile catering trailer at The Pour House. A Design and Access Statement is not a statutory requirement for this application: it is not major development, it does not consist of one or more dwellings, and it does not create 100 square metres or more of new gross floorspace, the tests set out in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 for when such a statement is required. It is provided in this case in the interests of full transparency, given the site's planning history and its position within the Devizes Conservation Area and in relation to a Grade II listed building.

2. Assessment of Site and Surroundings

The application site is the rear courtyard of The Pour House, a ground floor drinking establishment (sui generis use) occupying the former coach house associated with the adjoining District Club, a Grade II listed building (List Entry Number 1252311). The site lies within the Devizes Conservation Area, in the historic core of the town, close to Devizes Town Hall.

Prior to the applicant taking on the lease, the rear yard had been used by previous occupiers as an informal dumping ground for rubbish, discarded equipment, wood and other waste materials, alongside informal use for parking. The applicant cleared, tidied and improved the area with her landlord's consent before introducing customer seating. This clearance involved the removal of loose rubbish, discarded equipment and waste materials only; no demolition, structural alteration, or building or renovation works of any kind were carried out to any structure, wall or surface as part of this clearance. The yard is enclosed by boundary walls, fencing, mature trees and vegetation, and is separated from St John's Street and from the principal frontage of the coach house and the Club.

3. The Design

3.1 Use

The proposed uses, outdoor customer seating and the ancillary preparation and service of food from a mobile trailer, are both ancillary to the established sui generis drinking establishment use of The Pour House. Neither element introduces a standalone use independent of the pub; food from the trailer is provided solely to existing customers, not as a separate takeaway business.

3.2 Amount

The seating comprises two tables and four benches, accommodating approximately 10 to 12 people. The trailer is a single, wheeled catering unit. No new buildings or permanent structures are proposed, and no additional floorspace is created.

3.3 Layout

The seating and trailer are positioned to the rear of the site, within the existing enclosed courtyard, close to the building. The trailer's position has been specifically chosen to preserve the mature trees on site, their canopy and root protection area, rather than to maximise trading space.

3.4 Scale

Both elements are modest in scale relative to the site: the seating is limited to two tables and four benches, and the trailer is a single unit of a size typical of small mobile catering trailers used at small events, rather than a large-scale catering operation.

3.5 Landscaping

The applicant has introduced movable planters, which, like the seating furniture and the trailer, are unattached and not fixed to the ground; no new planting has been introduced directly into the ground. The applicant has also retained and maintained the site's existing mature trees, which provide natural screening in addition to the boundary walls and fencing. This represents a positive change from the site's previous condition as a neglected dumping ground, consistent with enhancing rather than merely preserving the appearance of this part of the conservation area.

3.6 Appearance

The seating furniture is simple, traditional beer-garden style timber furniture. The trailer is clad in varnished timber, chosen deliberately for its tidy, traditional appearance rather than a modern or brightly branded design, so that it sits sympathetically within the historic character of the site.

4. Access

4.1 Vehicular access

No change is proposed to the site's existing vehicular access and egress arrangements, which are taken from St John's Street via the existing private car park. No deliveries are received at the rear of the property; deliveries associated with the trailer, as with the existing bar operation, are received at the front of the premises from St John's Street, within the existing delivery hours already applicable to the site under Condition 4 of 13/01343/FUL.

4.2 Pedestrian and inclusive access

Customer access to the courtyard is via the existing route through The Pour House itself at the rear of the building which is level and surfaced, bordered by planting and low fencing. Customers do not access the courtyard via the private car park, which is separate land and does not form part of the customer route. No alteration to this route is proposed. The seating and trailer do not introduce any new barrier to access within the courtyard.

5. Conclusion

The proposal is modest in use, amount, layout, scale and appearance, is well screened from public view, and makes positive use of an area previously neglected. It does not alter vehicular or pedestrian access to the site. Although not a statutory requirement for this application, this statement is provided so that the Local Planning Authority has the fullest possible information available in reaching its decision.