



56 Wokingham Road, Reading, RG6 1JJ

Proposed erection of a single storey front extension, two storey side and rear extension, garage conversion to create annex and front porch.

Planning Statement

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1. Introduction

1.1. Preface

This planning statement has been prepared in support of a householder application for the proposed erection of a single storey front extension, two storey side and rear extension, garage conversion to create annex and front porch at 56 Wokingham Road in Reading.

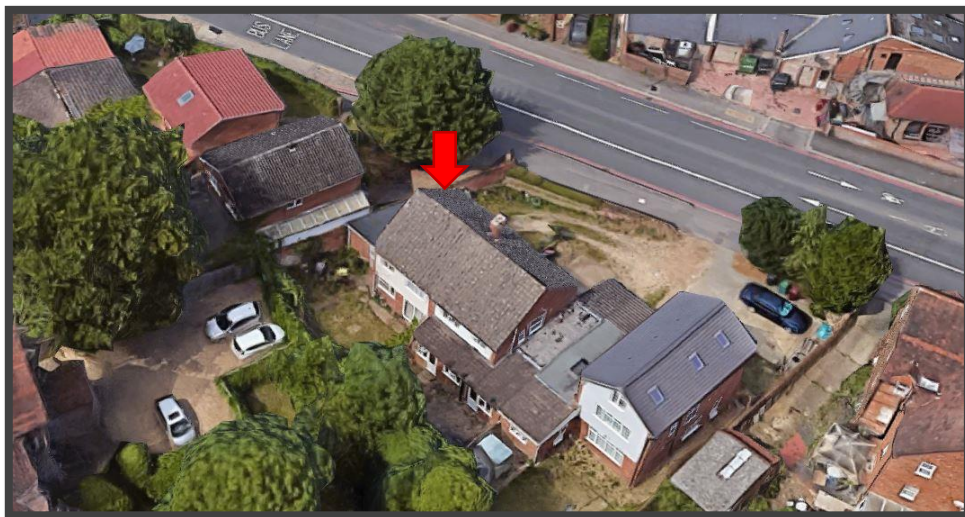
The following statement covers the subject and information required for submission as set National Planning Policy Framework (2021) and Reading Borough Local Plan documents. This document will outline the application site history and the design strategy for the proposed development. It should be read in conjunction with the submitted drawings.

1.2. Site Location



Aerial photograph



*Bird's eye photograph (front)**Bird's eye photograph (rear)*

1.3. Site Description

The application site is located on the southern side of Wokingham Road, around 1.4km to the east from Reading town centre. No. 56 Wokingham Road dwelling is a link-detached house, located within a group of detached, semi-detached and terraced dwellings. Adjacent to no. 56 there is a three storey block of flats to the rear, surrounded by individual dwellinghouses. To the front, on the opposite side of the road there is a row of distinctive terraced dwellings, of a repeatable design and scale. As a whole the surrounding area is considered to be significantly mixed in terms of the scale and design of the properties.



Summarising, within the closest proximity from the application property, there are numerous of buildings, diverse in terms of their:

- type (semi-detached; detached; terraced; block of flats);
- fenestration and architectural details;
- roof forms (angle, design, ridge/eaves height);
- scale/footprint/volume;
- landscaping;
- distance from the highway, boundary treatment and driveways.

1.4. Planning history

- Application ref. 200901 – Single storey front extension, two storey side and rear extension, garage conversion to create annex and front porch. – **Refused on 24/08/2020.**
- Application ref. 210799 – Single storey front extension, two storey side and rear extension, garage conversion to create annex and front porch. – **Refused on 13/07/2021.**

The current proposal is for a similar development, however of a reduced scale, subservient design and in keeping appearance.

1.5. Existing appearance of the application site and surroundings









2. Planning Policy

2.1. NPPF

Achieving Sustainable Development

Paragraph 7 of the NPPF emphasises that *“The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development”* and expands that in the paragraph 8, that it *“has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive:*

- *an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;*
- *a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being;*
- *an environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy”.*

Furthermore, a decision-making in favour of sustainable development is strengthened and its significant weight is confirmed in paragraph 38, which states that *“Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. They should use the full range of planning tools available, including brownfield registers and permission in principle, and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible”.*

Housing Quality and Design

Paragraph 126 of the NPPF states that the *“creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve”* and that *“good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities”.*



Furthermore, NPPF paragraph 128 emphasizes an important role of the design codes and guides, which should *“provide a framework for creating distinctive places, with a consistent and high quality standard of design”* and that *“their level of detail and degree of prescription should be tailored to the circumstances in each place, and should allow a suitable degree of variety where this would be justified”*.

Paragraph 130 of the NPPF comprises a list, in terms of what decisions should ensure with regards to proposed developments, inter alia:

- *“function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*
- *are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;*
- *are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);*
- *establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;*
- *optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and*
- *create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience”*.

Delivering a decent level of design quality is comprised in paragraph 130 - *“Development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design”*.

2.2. Local Development Framework (November 2019)

Accessibility

Number of Local Plan Policies relate to sustainable development, such as CC6 ‘Accessibility and the intensity of development’ part, which emphasises importance of sustainable location of development – *“The scale and density of development will be related to its level of accessibility by walking, cycling*



and public transport to a range of services and facilities, with the densest and largest scale development taking place in the most accessible locations. Unless it can be demonstrated that the accessibility of a site is to be significantly upgraded, for example, by providing high quality pedestrian routes or providing access to good public transport services, any new development must be at a scale, density and intensity appropriate to that level of accessibility.”.

Policy CC6 explains in paragraph 4.1.25 that “...primary locations for new development will be those accessible by walking and cycling to a wide range of employment, services and facilities, leisure, education and health facilities, or which are accessible by walking to routes/stops of frequent public transport services that provide easy access to the aforementioned uses”. Paragraphs 4.1.27 continues that good level of accessibility means - “to be that within 400m of a defined centre with a good range of facilities by pedestrian routes, and within 400m by pedestrian routes of a bus stop served by a service with a frequency of better than one bus every 20 minutes in each direction within daytime hours (7.00 a.m. to 7.00 p.m.).”

The general health targets, accompanying appropriately located developments, mentioned in the explanation of this policy include:

- *“increased physical activity;*
- *decreased incidences of cardiovascular disease and obesity;*
- *reduced levels of stress caused by traffic noise and congestion;*
- *fewer cases of lung or heart disease associated with poor air quality;*
- *proximity to healthcare services;*
- *access to open space for recreation”.*

Design Quality

Policy CC7 states that “All development must be of high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area of Reading in which it is located. The various components of development form, including:

- *Layout: urban structure and urban grain;*
- *Landscape;*
- *Density and mix;*
- *Scale: height and massing; and*
- *Architectural detail and materials”.*

The above components are linked with the subsequently highlighted urban design objectives, which should be enhanced by the proposals, inter alia:



- *“Character - a place with its own identity and sense of place;*
- *Continuity and enclosure;*
- *Quality of the public realm and provision of green infrastructure and landscaping;*
- *Ease of movement and permeability;*
- *Legibility - clear image and easy to understand;*
- *Adaptability – capable of adaptation over time;*
- *Diversity – meets a wide range of needs”.*

In addition, CC7 summarizes and encourages to ensure that proposed developments:

- *“Respond positively to their local context and create or reinforce local character and distinctiveness, including protecting and enhancing the historic environment of the Borough and providing value to the public realm;*
- *Create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder or fear of crime does not undermine quality of life or community cohesion;*
- *Address the needs of all in society and are accessible, usable and easy to understand by them, including providing suitable access to, into and within, its facilities, for all potential users, including disabled people, so that they can use them safely and easily;*
- *Are visually attractive as a result of good high quality built forms and spaces, the inclusion of public art and appropriate materials and landscaping.”.*

3. Appraisal

3.1. General concept

The overall aim of the proposal is to make efficient use of the existing site and its assets, by proposing part single part double storey extension of the existing two storey building and creation of a more friendly space for occupiers of improved internal layout, design and sustainability, through the above proposal.

3.2. Impact on the Character of the Area

The proposed development would include external extensions to the side of the dwelling, where its appearance and layout would be significantly improved, which would also be clearly visible within the streetscene. Furthermore, the existing single storey element to the side, which currently serves as a storage, would be replaced at the application property, effectively resulting in a visual improvement in terms of the overall appearance. The project includes an in keeping external design, which would reflect the character of the area, but also upgraded to a high-quality design and standard of living



internally. The proposal includes some additional fenestration elements installed within the existing building, in order to provide a more appropriate and residential character and improved quality of living of the future occupiers and protect neighbours of the application site. The proposal includes installation of sympathetic windows and doors on the ground and first floor level. The proposed development contains cohesive architectural features, in order to provide a perfectly sympathetic and in keeping design, fully suitable for this property. There are no modern, contrasting additions or contemporary architectural forms, therefore the proposal would entail positive impact upon the character of the streetscene.

It is considered that the current proposal would solve issues raised in the previously refused applications, due to much more subservient design and reduced scale, which would appear complimentary in relation to the host dwelling. It would save sufficient outdoor amenity space for the current occupiers due to reduction of the footprint at the back and also mass and bulk of the proposed extension would be considered uncontentious and acceptable.

The main improvements in comparison with the previously refused applications include:

- **Reduced projection from 3.4m to 2.0m at the back;**
- **Reduced width from 4.6m to 3.4m from the side elevation;**
- **Provision of more generous gap between neighbouring dwellings;**
- **Provision of more spacious rear garden, adequate for such size of a dwelling.**

3.3. Impact on neighbours

Loss of Light and Overbearing

Due to the host dwelling's situation, overall scale and form of the proposed development and sufficient separation distances from the neighbouring properties, no adverse changes to current overbearing and overshadowing arrangement would be considered to arise.

Overlooking

Due to the proposed dwelling's situation and sufficient separation distances from the neighbouring properties, no adverse changes to current overlooking arrangement would be considered to arise as well. The proposed rear windows would be installed in a sufficient distance from neighbouring buildings, with no unacceptable impact upon their users' amenity.

3.4. Transport, parking and access

The proposed site is located in the eastern part of Reading, on the southern side of Wokingham Road, which benefits from an extensive bus service including numerous routes with frequent links to Reading



Centre and Wokingham Town Centre. Furthermore, Reading Station is located around 1.3km (15 min walk) to the west. The application property is sited in close vicinity to road which also provide vehicle access to the A329 and links with the M4 for towards the east to London and Wales to the west. The broad road networks around the site also provide huge choice and possibilities of cycle routes and walking paths in and around the area.

There are also easily accessible local amenities along shopping parades on Wokingham Road around 5 min walk from the application site. Both retail locations include wide range of services such as grocery shops, pharmacy, cafes, pubs, educational facilities etc. In general the location is considered sustainable.

No. 56 Wokingham Road benefits from an off-street parking for 2x vehicles at the front of the property. This arrangement would be retained within the proposed scheme, however thanks to a highly sustainable location, close to the town centre, the proposal would be considered acceptable and uncontentious with regards to this aspect. Additionally, the proposal includes lockable bike storage in the back.

3.5. Ecology, landscaping, environmental health

The proposed development would be considered neutral with regards to the ecology, landscaping and environmental health aspects. The application site does not contain any significant tree or valuable landscaping, nor it would disturb any protected species, therefore it would result in an uncontentious impact upon the above elements.

8. Conclusion

By virtue of the scale and nature of the considered that it would comply with Local Plan, therefore we kindly appeal,

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proposed development, it is the relevant parts of NPPF, Reading BC to approve the submitted application.

