Supporting Application Statement

HOUSEHOLDER PLANNING APPLICATION FOR A PART TWO STOREY, PART SINGLE STOREY REAR EXTENSION AT 77 ALBERT ROAD, CAVERSHAM, READING RG4 7AW

Client: Mr. & Mrs D. Moir
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1.00 INTRODUCTION

1.01 AIMS OF THE STATEMENT

This Supporting Statement accompanies a Householder Planning submission by the applicant for a part two storey, part single storey rear extension at No. 77 Albert Road, Caversham.

The description of the development is as follows:

> *'Part two storey, part single storey rear extension within the curtilage of the site'*

The aims of this Supporting Statement are to show that the proposed development has been informed by an awareness of the site's context, principles highlighted by Reading Borough Council and Local Government.

The statement will explain the proposals, identify the factors which have influenced this application and highlight the principles that were incorporated in the detailed design of the proposed works.

This statement is in accordance with CABE's guidance 'Design and Access Statements – How to Write, Read and Use them', the Reading Borough Local Plan (Adopted November 2019), Design Guide to House extensions (SPD – March 2021) and the criteria highlighted within National Planning Policy Framework especially regarding 'good design' (2019).

1.02 PLANNING POLICIES

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant planning policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'.

Within the Reading Borough Local Plan (Adopted November 2019), the main Cross Cutting Policies relevant to the development are:

Policy CC1 'Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development' A positive approach to considering development proposals will be taken that reflect the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Where appropriate, the council will work proactively with applicants jointly to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible.

Policy CC7 'Design and the Public Realm' All developments must be of a 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 the development form will be assessed to ensure that the development proposed makes a positive contribution.

The local character and sense of place should be positively enhanced within the local context.

Reading Borough Council – Design Guide to House Extensions (SPD):

Sections 6 & 7 - the key objective of the Design Guidance is to retain and enhance the attractiveness of the Borough's environment through well designed and inclusive developments.

The proposal provides an opportunity to add to the visual amenity of the area and the contribution to the residential character of the area. The carefully considered design sensitively addresses the site and its surroundings within a residential setting.

2.00 SITE ASSESSMENT

2.01 LOCATION

The application site is on Albert Road, Caversham, and is accessed off the classified road. The site is considered as located within a residential area.

Caversham is located north of Reading Town Centre and can be accessed via the A4155 (Caversham Road) or B3345 (Gosbrook Road). No. 77 is a detached property with a garage. The properties along Albert Road are modestly set back from the footpath with low shrubs and trees to the frontage curtilages that allow a spatial separation from public and private areas. No. 77 is accessed directly off Albert Road.

The house types along Albert Road are varied in terms of mass, bulk and architectural detailing. There are a mix of residential uses with some larger dwellings converted into flatted developments. Many of the dwellings are predominantly in red brick and rendered facades with accent brickwork and tile hanging to frontages and tiled roofs.

No. 77 is a detached dwelling with an access drive that is located west of the highway. No. 77 has not previously been extended but has had the addition of a side garage. To the south of the site is No. 75 which is a Victorian semi that has been extended in the past, part of which was facilitated by the purchase of land from No. 77.

St Andrews Church to the north is obscured by low-rise outbuildings that are part of the church. The property is adjoined by gardens to the west that are generous in size. The existing garden boundaries of adjoining properties being screened by mature trees and planting. However, due to the juxtaposition of the dwellings there is good separation between the properties.

The main highway, Albert Road, has ample width for two vehicles to pass comfortably with pedestrian footpaths to both sides of the highway.

There are a mix of dwelling types on Albert Road with other house types further afield in the area i.e. St Andrews Road, predominantly in red brick, render panels and tiled roofs.

Location Plan

2.02 SITE & PLANNING HISTORY

The earliest planning permission on record dates back to 1960 (ref: 0000007540) for *'Two storey house'*, with this application being refused in April 1960. The council records appear to indicate that the site was used for 'offices' during 1960 and Ordnance Survey data for this period suggests that the site was vacant and attached to No. 75. Outline Planning consent was obtained in May 1964 (ref: 0000011559) for *'The erection of a dwellinghouse on land adjoining No. 75 Albert Road, Caversham'* by Mr. G. F. Robinson. The consent retained one planning condition relating to access as a shared driveway which was proposed for garages at the end of the garden area. This application would suggest that the land was attached to No. 75 Albert Road and was developed by the owners. This is now registered under a deed for No. 75.

The outline application was shortly followed by a detailed planning application (ref: 0000011761) for *'The erection of a detached dwellinghouse on land adjoining No. 75 Albert Road, Caversham'* which obtained consent in July 1964. The consent retained the earlier planning condition for the minimum width of access to the garages as noted below.

'That the proposed vehicular access shall be not less than 10 feet in width and shall be retained at all times for the joint user of the occupant of No. 75 Albert Road, Caversham, and the proposed dwelling.'

The adjacent St Andrews Church made an application in October 2001 (ref: 01/01354/FUL) for *'Extension to existing church hall, construction of new two storey parish office/meeting rooms/2 one-bedroom flats and new single storey link to church building'*. The application was granted full planning permission in April 2002 and retained 21 planning conditions. From the available information the permission is only partially implemented in the construction of the link between the church and church hall. It is noted that there are several pre-commencement conditions relating to protected trees in the vicinity of the link, however, the records from the council appear not to have these. Condition 20 requests details of the development phasing, however, there are no references for this other than notes on the church link drawings as 'phase 1' and the earlier planning officers report. It is also noted that the council records show no evidence of conditions 16 (archaeology) and 17 (Noise) as having been undertaken prior to any development on the site.

Other properties in the area that have obtained residential planning consents are noted below.

- No. 20 Buxton Avenue (ref: 11/00599/FUL)
- No. 68 Albert Road (ref: 992501)

In September 1997 Reading Borough confirmed that the side ground floor extension to 75 Albert did not need planning permission and was confirmed in letter dated 23 September 1997.

Existing frontage

3.00 INVOLVEMENT & EVALUATION

3.01 INVOLVEMENT

Given the location of the application site is within a residential area, clarity was sought from Reading Borough Council with regards to the type of application required for a part two storey and part single storey extension. In November 2022 Planning Enquiries confirmed the available records for 77 Albert Road, from which it was clear that no restrictive conditions were attached to the detached property.

The applicant's wish to carry out the proposals to allow them to have an internal layout fit for their ongoing needs, whilst sensitively altering the external appearance to be complementary to its surroundings, and in turn the character of Albert Road and the wider area. The applicant's investment in the proposals will relate to usefulness of the proposal, therefore, any amendments will require further consideration in terms of value and viability.

Existing northern boundary

Existing Southern Boundary

3.02 EVALUATION

The proposal is for a Householder Planning application to create a kitchen/dining area, utility and shower room at ground floor, and to extend bedroom 1 to provide an en-suite.

The new kitchen/dining area would allow for an improved space with views onto the amenity area. The dedicated utility room would allow for a side access into the garden, along with a shower room accessed from the hallway. The new fenestration is to match the existing pattern along with the form of construction and render finish. The introduction of bi-folding doors and a rooflight to the rear will allow natural light deep into the plan. There are to be no other alterations to the property, therefore, this proposal is in line with policy CC7 Design in the Public Realm

The form of the extension is kept away from the flank boundaries for maintenance purposes. The ground and first floor fenestration are orientated to the rear of the property and therefore will not promote any overlooking onto adjacent properties. The two storey element has been located away from the adjacent neighbour to eliminate any overbearing issues. The scale of the proposal is in keeping with the form of the original dwelling referencing visual design cues. Therefore, the proposal is in line with Section 6.0 of SPD – Design guide to house extensions.

It is noted that No. 75 Albert Road was extended in the past with a small side extension. The existing side extension has a window and door facing directly onto the boundary fence and is 1.6m away from the boundary. The window and door serves a kitchen and utility room respectively which are not deemed to be habitable rooms. Moreover, the window is orientated north and therefore will not be subject to any sunlight. Therefore, the proposal will not impact any amount of light to this window. The proposal is in line with Section 7.0 of SPD – Design guide to house extensions.

The location of the extension will be less obvious from the highway by virtue of its location to the rear of the property.

Existing rear elevation

Existing outbuild

4.00 DESIGN

4.01 PRINCIPLES OF DEVELOPMENT

Reading Borough Local Development – Core Strategy Policy CC7 states that the policy seeks to ensure development is of a high standard of design that can integrate with the character of the area and is also important to achieving sustainable development in the Borough.

In considering the design of the proposed part two storey, part single storey rear extension it should be noted that the new extension does not obscure any light to the adjacent properties. The properties have their front and rear elevations facing east and west respectively on a uniform building line, therefore, there will be no harsh shadows from the east or west sunlight.

The proposal will serve to rationalise the external elevations whilst allowing an ordered floor plan layout. The proposal is a positive design enhancement that will be completely in keeping with the character of the area, in mass and height. The low-key alterations to the rear will create a minor elevational change, with a small increase in length of the dwelling's footprint. In addition, the bulk and mass would be proportionally in keeping with the existing property.

The impact of the rear extension to No. 75 would be minimal in terms of mass and articulation, therefore, the amount of light and shade will be identical to the present situation.

In order to reflect a good design in keeping within the existing residential area, it was considered that a simple part two storey, part single storey rear extension with a part pitch, part flat roof would complement and integrate well with the existing dwelling and would be sensitive to the existing surroundings. The proposal makes a positive contribution to the character of the area. The massing is appropriate in terms of height, design and appearance. The modest new rear extension will match the existing dwelling in terms of form, scale and materials.

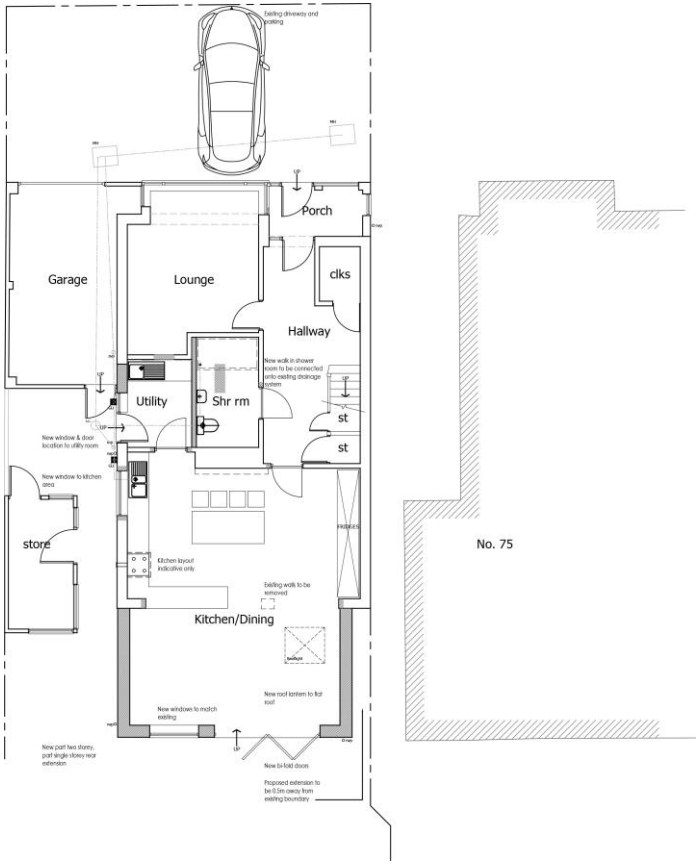
The design components are discussed in more detail in the following sections.

Existing view from neighbouring church car park

4.02 ACCOMMODATION

The proposed development seeks to create a kitchen/dining, utility and shower room at ground floor. Bedroom 1 is to be extended at first floor to accommodate an en-suite.

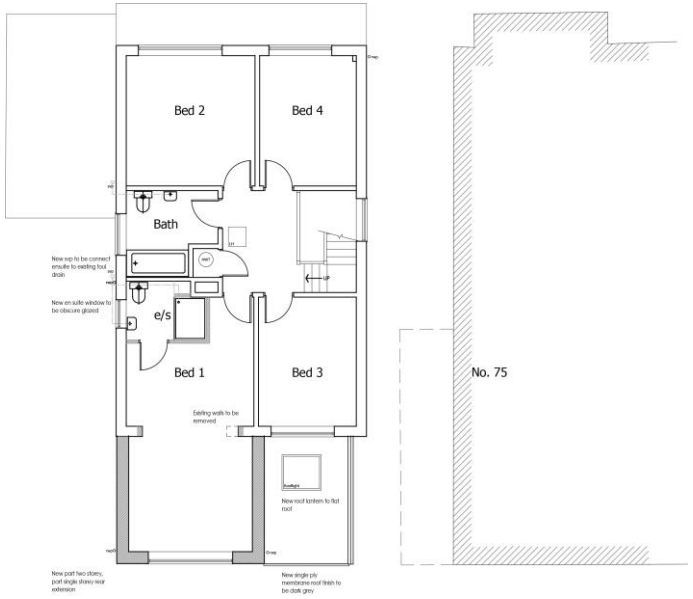
The alterations to the elevations in introducing bi-fold doors and window casements will integrate with the form of the dwelling and the new rooflight will allow light to percolate deep within the layout plan.



Proposed Ground Floor

4.03 LAYOUT

The proposed extension will maintain and reflect the principal orientation of the existing dwelling. The accommodation, now rationalised, will be easy to access and move through. The new accommodation will be naturally daylighted, where possible, with openings to the north, east and south elevations.



Proposed First Floor

4.04 SCALE

The proposal seeks to create a kitchen/dining and first floor bedroom extension to the rear of the existing dwelling. Rationalisation of the form of the proposal is to retain a maximum usable floor area within the guidelines of Reading Borough Local Plan and RBC – Design Guide to House Extensions (SPD), allowing the required level of accommodation. The modest ground and first floor additions will match the existing materials and reflect an appropriate form and scale to the existing dwelling.

The immediate neighbouring property to the north is St Andrews Church where the existing outbuildings are over 20m away. Other neighbouring properties to the west are approximately 48m away and screened by mature vegetation. Existing properties across the highway to the east are circa over 22m away and screened by mature vegetation. The massing of the proposal adjacent to No. 75 to the south would be single storey only, and within the shadow of No. 75.

Whilst the site would be visible from the neighbouring properties, it is not considered that there would be any detrimental impacts or encroachments on the residential amenities presently enjoyed by the occupants of these properties, in fact, the proposed extension would be less conspicuous from the highway due to its location.

Proposed Side (north), Rear & Side (south) elevations respectively.

4.05 LANDSCAPING

The existing hard and soft landscaping will be retained and will remain unchanged and therefore form a strong framework which will emphasize the landscape structure within the site.

4.06 APPEARANCE

The appearance of the proposal seeks to preserve the character of the existing property and maintain the appearance, where the existing building condition and physical form are a strong element within the street scene. The modest new addition will match the existing in terms of form, scale and materials.

External fenestration has been designed to match in with the existing elevations limiting the impact of the residential features. The resultant juxtaposition between the proposed form and the use of vernacular materials enables the strength of the existing form and design to provide an appropriate and sympathetic visual reference to the characteristics of the existing site and its environs.

4.07 ACCESS

The proposed access to the dwelling will remain as existing from Albert Road, using the existing point of access. With regards to the impact upon highway safety conditions along Albert Road it is deemed that no adverse effects will arise from the proposal as no alterations to the existing boundary treatments are proposed.

The proposal will not result in an increased generation of vehicle movements per day, and it is not considered that the development would result in a material impact upon the existing road safety in regard to vehicular movements onto Albert Road.

Existing view west

View north to St Andrews Church

5.00 CONCLUSION

The physical extent of the development proposed within this residential location has been appropriately designed ensuring the visual impact upon the character, appearance and visual amenity of the locality has been preserved.

It is the applicant's desire to create a high-quality enhancement to the site, the scheme has been designed to the highest standards thus ensuring a quality and sensitive development overall within keeping of its surroundings.

The proposal will not give rise to any adverse impacts upon the residential amenities within the mature vegetation currently enjoyed by existing residents within the proximity of the site. The proposal will make a minor increase in floor area, 30 sqm and under section 4 of the Reading Borough Council Community Infrastructure Levy, Guidance Notes for Applicants, February 2015, the proposal is exempt from these charges

The development will not prejudice highway safety conditions along Albert Road or at the junctions immediately adjacent to the property.

Given the proposals lack of encroachment and visibility beyond the immediate vicinity of the site, it is not considered that there would be any harmful visual impact on the residential environment, and therefore considered to be acceptable and in accordance with policy CC7.

The development therefore complies with national planning guidance and strategic and local planning policies. On the basis of the evidence and justification set out in this Supporting Statement with the application, it is respectfully requested that this Householder application be approved.

Highway view north

Highway view south