

APPENDIX 1 rev. A

A1.1 Openness study

Openness is considered fundamental to this scheme and the way in which a new dwelling will interact with the current level of openness without detracting from it has been carefully considered and developed. A concern is the new dwelling will reduce this openness and create a cramped addition when compared with the existing street scene. The following offers the design development undertaken to reach the final proposed scheme and why the concerns raised are not realized.

A1.2 Existing openness on the site

The existing site has a number of aspects which provide opportunity for reducing the impact of additional mass. There is currently a large double garage at ground level which is not too dissimilar to the proposed ground floor, this is not considered problematic. However in addition to this there is a large apple tree which visibly acts as a dominant feature, reducing views through from front to back, casting a small level of shadow onto the neighbouring property and presents a large volume at two and three storeys in height. By removing this we shall remove a large expanse of volume and replace with a similar mass. The impact shall be reduced as a result and the level of openness marginally different to the current situation. The proposal for climbing edible plants and the retention of all existing trees to the front of the proposed property alongside those planted to the rear (please refer to block plan) also ensure the green nature of the site is not only retained but enhanced. The result will be a beautifully integrated new dwelling that enhances the green nature of the site, provides habitats for flora and fauna alike with an on-site food source. The plants also aid the passive ventilation strategy whereby the climbing plants aid in solar shading and dynamic cooling via evaporation in the heat of summer.

A1.3 Existing precedent along Balmore Drive

It was not only important to focus on no.87. but also the wider context along Balmore Drive and existing levels of openness represented between the built environment. The following represents a study undertaken to explore this theme and how the existing street scene may influence the proposal.



- Photo 1. View from the front of the proposed scheme, showing the impact of the existing landscape and garage on the openness. Whilst attractive, the site clearly does not have a dramatic level of openness as suggested
- Photo 2. This view from the rear of the property highlights the current level of openness which is negligible. The trees are numerous and positioned in a way almost entirely block any view from the front to the rear. The proposal is over 2.2m away from the existing building and will offer a far greater sense of openness than that observed currently

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Photo 3. Neighbouring property showing construction directly against the border and nearly up to the neighbours eaves level. In principle the neighbour could replicate this, resulting in a two storey solid built mass, connecting 2no. pairs of properties



Photo 4. An existing property showing development between the pairs of two storeys including the roof space. The distance between the two properties is less than 1.6m, with the proposal discussed being over 2.2m



Photo 5. Neighbouring property showing an extension beyond two storeys high including roof mass. It is reasonable to assume the neighboring property will be able to develop to match that of the neighbour which again would result in a gap of only 1.6m between the houses full height to roof level



Photo 6. A large two storey and roof extension on a similar corner plot. This shows a large reduction in the sense of openness, with no greenery around the front of the site which would help visually soften the impact. Something this scheme seeks to use with great effect



Photo 7. A large two storey extension including extensive roof volume. The ground floor is only a matter of inches away from the neighbouring boundary, with the first floor just over half a meter away. The proposal discussed within this application is over 2.2m between the closest parts



Photo 8. This is a very clear example of a large two storey/ roof extension constructed almost directly on the boundary. This is considered much more detrimental in many cases such as mass and volume when compared with the proposed scheme, but highlights the important role of using the landscape to reduce the visual impact on the site and surrounding area



Photo 9. A further example of the theme of a large full height extension very close to the neighbouring boundary. This is approximately only 0.8m away from the boundary line

Photo 10. The final example shown is located directly opposite the proposed scheme. It shows an existing building doubled in width and very close to the neighbouring property, only approximately half a meter away at the closest point. The extension is full height and clearly reduces the level of openness



Please note, all of the examples shown are located directly on Balmore Drive, with some primary examples very close or even opposite the site.

A1.4 Architectural response

Following a developed understanding of the theme of openness to both the direct site and wider context, an informed architectural response could be sensitively developed. The following seeks to explore the key principles captured within the architectural response.

The pre-application process proved fundamental to the final response and a close working relationship with the planning officer and design team allowed a final design that incorporates all concerns raised and a holistically evolved intervention. This included the extensive changes to the original scheme to alleviate these aspects. Including the fundamental form and mass of the proposal whereby the width was reduced by over 0.5m to ensure greater space between the new and existing properties, making the narrowest point over 2.2m away from each other. As demonstrated above this is far greater than a vast number of existing houses. The nature of the angled site largely aids the property by ensuring a far greater open space to no.88, over 7.4m in fact. This is encouraging considering this property has already had a substantial extension and is considered to change very little a result in coming years.

The height was also reduced to below the dormer ridge to no.87, making the proposal visually lower and subservient to the existing property. This also helps to form a dialogue between the old and new, original and contemporary. Alongside this reduction in overall mass, volume and bulk, the form was also dramatically changed to reflect the existing typology of the pitched roof form and further shave away volume. This offers a much more subtle integration within the existing form as well as an increased level of openness. The geometric nature of the roofs and their intersection between hips and valley's of varying roof heights has been explored and developed to produce a sympathetic yet original thesis of what a roof is, and can be. A sculptural expression of functionality.

A detailed understanding of the existing site was fundamental in the final architectural expression and uses the existing visual mass of the garage and surrounding trees to demonstrate a minimal net increase. The visual impact is minimal whereby the achievement of a local new dwelling of unique character, contextually designed and environmental sensitivity is far greater.

The material selection differed from the original scheme and it is felt the detailed dialogue with the planning officer enabled a cohesive final scheme. The brickwork helps relate the proposal closely to the existing houses, with the thermal mass, texture and cladding method providing an opportunity for heat regulation via the thermal mass and an opportunity for green edible flora to directly integrate with the built form and aid cooling in the summer, all visually softening the building

throughout the year, as well as integrating it with the existing green aesthetic of the site.

Along with the change in roof form as previously discussed, an opportunity for material change was presented and subsequently changed to matching roof tiles which certainly help nestle the scheme within the site and context.

The landscape is a fundamental aspect of this proposal and again has undertaken some significant changes following the pre-application advice and further design development. The existing landscape is largely unaffected. The only removal is a rose bush to the front garden and an apple tree towards the rear of the existing garage. This allows the site to function properly with minimal impact on the surrounding appearance. The multiple additions to both front and rear include planting to all borders, 4no. fruit trees to the rear and the relocation of the large existing Wisteria to the new entrance area. This has already been investigated and is perfectly reasonable to assume a successful relocation. The retention of the existing front fence and no need to increase the driveway width ensures the visual aesthetic is unaffected.

A detailed and lengthy analysis of the local and wider context has been fundamental to the presentation of what is considered a carefully designed and integrated scheme that sits comfortable into the site, has minimal disruption with regards to openness and actually enhances the offering. The close referencing to local and national planning policies have been thorough and carefully aligned to the final scheme.

