

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT FOR 131 WHITEKNIGHTS ROAD, READING, RG6 7BB

131 Whiteknights Road is a detached single storey dwelling with a shallow pitched roof. The dwelling is set to the north-west of a generous plot, which is roughly triangular in shape, and occupies a corner location. The dwelling is of a more modern design than its neighbors. The dwelling is reasonably well screened from the highway by perimeter hedging. The site is located opposite the University of Reading Whiteknights campus. The surrounding area is predominantly residential, generally comprised of large detached dwellings of various styles and design. The neighboring property at 141 Whiteknights Road, Randolph College, is affiliated to the University of Reading and is in use as student accommodation. The site is not located within a conservation area, nor is it within the setting of a listed building.

The proposals is for a contemporary extension to compliment the existing brick faced 60's bungalow, increasing the family accommodation, providing an additional three bedrooms for the young children and a new master bedroom.

Design considerations:

The location of the extension has been set back from the main entrance facade and drive, positioned towards the rear / North and over the existing building. There are a number of consideration that have influenced the positioning as follows:

Firstly to minimize any potential increase to the building foot print, enabling the existing amenity and garden space to be retained. To the North there is a slight increase of the foot print where the building extends out past the end of the entrance hall and master bedroom. The proposal is to use these spaces as covered areas with seating.

Secondly the new accommodation has been located over rooms where there is a false / lowered ceiling below the main roof, the rooms to the front of the house currently utilize the height of the roof and the rooms extend up to the underside of the roof, which is one of the main features of the house and typical of properties of this style, particularly in regard to the main family room.

Thirdly, stair access to the new extension has been a big contributing factor, we wished to have the new bedroom suite / extension accessed from the main hall, so that access to the family bedrooms were not through the main reception room. The Local Authority design review also expressed this location as their preference.

The existing layout lends itself to having the new stair access at the end of the hall (where the existing shower room is), rather than using up space from the kitchen or existing master bedroom, or within the hall. This layout retains the uninterrupted views through the hall out to the garden beyond.

The position of the stair works in conjunction with the orientation of the new bed rooms, these are to the South of the stair enabling windows to these rooms to be positioned on the South and East elevations with aspects either towards the front of the house or to the garden and therefore away from the rear of the neighbours properties.

The new extension includes three smaller bedrooms for the three children in the family as well as a master bedroom so that the family bedrooms are all located off the same stair and lobby, currently the master bedroom is located to the other end of the house to the children's room, which does not suit modern family life.

For the new construction we wish to use light weight construction (possibly a SIPs panel or timber frame) with a light weight sustainable timber cladding finish, as a general rule, timber is one of the most sustainable building materials, in terms of energy use, greenhouse gas emissions, air and water pollution, and waste created. It is also a cladding material that can be used in both contemporary and traditional construction along side a brick finish.

The window proportions are set out and guided by the existing windows, the existing are generally large picture windows. To the garden / east elevation to provide a cohesion between the ground and first floor, a timber recess detail to the windows has been created so that visually the window line through, and provide an element of interest to the elevation. Within the recessed the timber cladding will be orientated to a different angle and with the option to use the recessed for planting to create green living wall in fills, at ground floor level.

The height of the proposals are determined by achieving an appropriate head height internally and having a roof pitch to match the existing

Previous Pre Application Planning Advise

A previous scheme was submitted to the Local Planning Authority for Pre Application Planning Advise and we believe this scheme has made changes that are in line with the comments given, including:

- Omission of the over hang and extending the accommodation across the building so that it sits more centrally to the ground floor.
- The Panel welcomed the contemporary design aspiration of the proposed extension, this has been continued with these proposal in particular retaining a high level of design standard and attention to detail.
- The Panel liked the ground floor diagram of an axial entrance/heart/through to the garden with accommodation placed either side, and the scheme has been adjusted so that this has been retained, with the stairs to the new accommodation located at the end of the entrance hall, as well as including an atrium space joining the two spaces. The stair has been purposefully located to the side of the stair so as to not interrupt the view through.
- The panel had concerns with the original flat roof proposed so this has been adjusted to have a pitch to respond / match the existing roof line (around 5 - 7.5 degrees).
- The panel queried the proportions and arrangement of openings in the elevation as these need to support the whole. The window have been adjusted to reflect the proportions of the ground floor. To the East elevation a timber cladding recessed openings have been formed so that the opening to ground and first floor line through and these recessed will have timber cladding with a different orientation and width so read differently, these recesses will also be used as planting recesses.