

 Nicola Taplin Planning Ltd.
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Town and Country Planning Act 1990

PLANNING DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Proposed: Single storey front/side extension

At: 5 St Benetts Way, Emmer Green, Reading, RG4 8SZ

On behalf of: Stephen Evans and Sarah Britten



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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report accompanies a householder planning application for the erection of a single storey front/side extension at 5 St Benets Way, Emmer Green. The application is submitted on behalf of Stephen Evans and Sarah Bitten by Richard Fenn Designs Ltd.
- 1.2 The following report examines the merits of the application in planning, design and access terms.

2.0 Site Description

- 2.1 The application property comprises of a two-storey end terraced red brick dwelling with habitable rooms within the roofspace served by dormers, located on the north eastern corner of St Benets Way in Emmer Green. The front of the property is orientated towards the south with a central door and traditional sash windows. The private amenity space, driveway and garage are located to the side (north east) and the garden is enclosed by a 1.8m high brick wall to the side of the existing timber pedestrian gate to the rear garden. A dwarf wall and block metal railings define the extent of the front and side garden to the south and west. Photographs of the application property and surrounding area are attached below:



Front and side elevation (above)



Rear Elevation (above)

View of boundary wall and rear garden towards garage (below)



3 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

National Planning Policy

- 3.1 The policies in the National Planning Policy Framework apply from the 27th March 2012 and therefore it is a material consideration in dealing with planning applications for development. The Framework superseded previous PPG and PPS guidance (Annex 3) and sets out the Government's vision of sustainable development, which should be interpreted and applied locally to meet local aspirations. It provides a framework within which local people and their 'accountable' councils can produce their own distinctive local and neighbourhood plans, which reflect the needs and priorities of their communities (Paragraph 1). It also states that the Framework should be read and interpreted as a whole (Paragraph 6).
- 3.2 Section two of the Framework provides a definition of what is meant by delivering sustainable development and sets out three components of what this means for the planning system. The three components are planning for prosperity (the economic role), planning for people (a social role) and planning for places (an environmental role). Throughout the Framework document it emphasises that at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development and requires

policies in Local plans to follow this approach (Paragraphs 14 and 15 of the Framework).

- 3.3 Paragraph 15 of the NPPF states: “All plans should be based upon and reflect the presumption in favour of sustainable development, with clear policies that will guide how presumption should be applied locally.”
- 3.4 In Section 7 ‘Requiring good design’, the Framework emphasises the importance that the Government attaches to the design of the built environment and goes on to state that: *“Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people”*.
- 3.5 At paragraph 58, it states that: *“Planning policies and decisions should aim to ensure that developments:*
- will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*
 - establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit;*
 - optimise the potential of the site to accommodate development, create and sustain an appropriate mix of uses (including incorporation of green and other public space as part of developments) and support local facilities and transport networks;*
 - respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation;*
 - create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion; and*
 - are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping.”*
- 3.6 The NPPF fosters a positive approach to decision taking. It states in paragraph 186 that Local Authorities should approach decision-taking in a positive way to foster the delivery of sustainable development. The relationship between decision-taking and plan-making should be seamless, translating plans into high quality development on the ground. Paragraph 187 goes on to state that Local planning Authorities should look for **solutions** rather than problems, and decision-takers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible. Local authorities should work proactively with applicants to secure developments that improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area.

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- 3.7 The development plan consists of the adopted Core Strategy 2008 and the Sites and Detailed Policies Document (2012).
- 3.8 The Core strategy policy relevant to the consideration of this application is CS7 - Design in the Public Realm. The Relevant policies in the Sites and Detailed Policies Document (2012) are:
- DM4 (Safeguarding amenity) - requires development to not have a detrimental impact upon the living environment of existing and new properties in terms of privacy and overlooking; access to sunlight and daylight; visual dominance and overbearing impact and noise and disturbance.
 - DM9 (House Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation) confirms that an extension will be acceptable where it:-
 - i. Respects the character of the house in terms of its scale, location, materials and design;
 - ii. Respects the character and pattern of neighbouring properties and the street scene as a whole in terms of scale, location, materials and design and any important building line; and
 - iii. Does not present a large blank façade to public areas.
- 3.9 The Council also has Supplementary Planning Guidance - A Design Guide to House Extensions (2003).

4.0 PRINCIPAL ISSUES

Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Locality

- 4.1 Policy DM9: House Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation of the Sites and Detailed Policies Document (2012) states that an extension to a house should respect the character of the house in terms of scale, location, materials and design and respect the character and pattern of neighbouring properties and the street as a whole in terms of its scale, location, materials and design and any important building line. Policy CS7: Design and the Public Realm of the Core Strategy (2008) also states that all development must be of a high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area.
- 4.2 The proposal involves a modest extension to the ground floor of the application property to enlarge the family living space. The extension would be constructed with high quality materials to match those on the host dwelling. It is acknowledged that an

extension could be built with a larger footprint to the side of the property as permitted development. However, the applicant is keen to retain a good degree of outdoor amenity space within the garden and is seeking to utilise a small strip of redundant space to the side/front of the property between the front wall of the original dwelling and the 1.8m high brick boundary wall. The proposed extension would have a width of 3m and would project 1.4m to the front of the dwelling. The roof of the forward projecting element would be lowered to 3m in height. It is considered that this modest extension would respect the architectural integrity of the host dwelling. Furthermore, the projection to the front would not breach the return building line and would respect the spacing of development of this plot which is currently defined by the 1.8m high brick wall. As a result, it is considered that the proposed extension would not have a negative impact upon the visual amenity of the site or the surrounding area in accordance with Policy DM6 House Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation of the Sites and Detailed Policies Document (2012) and Core Strategy Policy CS7: Design and the Public Realm of the Core Strategy (2008).

Impact on Neighbours

- 4.3 Policy DM4 requires development to not have a detrimental impact upon the living environment of existing and new properties in terms of privacy and overlooking; access to sunlight and daylight; visual dominance and overbearing impact and noise and disturbance.
- 4.4 Given the limited sideways projection of the proposed extension, the levels of light and outlook to the occupants of the adjoining property at number 3 St Benets Way would not be compromised. Sufficient separation is achieved between the proposed extension and Number 7 St Benets Way to the north east to ensure that there would be no loss of residential amenity.
- 4.5 In summary, the applicant considers that the proposal would not result in an adverse loss of amenity to the occupants of the two adjacent properties at Numbers 3 and 7 St Benets Way in accordance with Policy DM4: Safeguarding Amenity of Sites and Detailed Policies Document.

5.0 Conclusion

- 5.1 The proposal complies with the development plan policies and supplementary Planning Guidance. The proposal is also in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework which encourages Local Planning Authorities to approach decisions positively, looking for solutions rather than problems so that applications can be approved wherever it is practicable to do so. In light of this, the Council is respectfully requested to **approve** the application.

