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## **Design & Access Statement**

And

## **Construction Method Statement**

**Proposal for a detached two storey dwelling on  
adjacent land to No 171**

at

171 Blagdon Road  
Reading  
RG2 7NE

2662-001

22 April 2016



## INTRODUCTION

Our client proposes to create a two bedroom detached, two storey dwelling within his garden adjacent 171 Blagdon Road. The client owns number 171 and currently lives there with his father.

He would like to create a two bedroom detached dwelling on the adjacent land in order to be able to live in it himself, and to be able to occasionally look after his son who lives mostly with his mother in Finland, whilst his elderly father would remain in the existing house.



Location: 171 Blagdon Rd & the adjacent land in green

## SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The site is located approximately 3 miles from Reading Train Station. Approximately every 15 minutes buses run between the station and town centre and Shinfield Road, just about 2 minute walk to the east of the site. (number 3 & 9 buses stop on Shinfield Rd / Blagdon Rd junction).

The site lies north of Blagdon Road and opposite Rabson Recreational Ground. Properties in the area are typical to number 171 in terms of design, type and date. The site benefits from a large triangular plot that is situated between Hazel Crescent and Blagdon Road.

The site is located in Zone 3, Reading Town Centre is a 20 minutes bus ride away from the site (number 9 bus, every 15 minutes). The main train station is 11 minutes drive from Blagdon Road with direct train connections to London. The town centre can be reached on foot within 30 minutes, or in approximately 10 minutes by bicycle.



View of 171 and the adjacent garden / proposed site.

## PLANNING HISTORY

The previous proposal, *Pre-application enquiry erection of a two storey, subservient, pitched roof 6m x 6m side extension* was deemed unacceptable (Pre-app Enquiry Ref 151852). Following this advise our client decided that rather than a 'granny annex' for his father, he would propose a new dwelling for himself to move to, whilst his father will stay in the existing house.

The issues raised at pre-app are addressed in the following sections, but largely related to the fact that the annex seemed to be too large for a side extension, was not set back from the street elevation and it was deemed that the annex with 2 bedrooms + en-suite bathrooms was in excess of what could be argued to be ancillary to the house.

By creation of a carefully designed separate unit we believe that we have overcome these issues.

## PLANNING CONSULTATION

As the site is sufficiently large, there is the opportunity to create an additional detached dwelling on this triangular site.

The previous side extension was deemed to be unacceptable at pre-app (reference 151852/PREAPP).

As a side extension the pre-app proposal was deemed to dominate the existing house but we feel this has been overcome by careful design to mimic the gable end in existence at the other end of this row of houses (at nr 27 Highmead Close).

As the proposal is now for a standalone dwelling there is no need to be subservient to the existing house. The solution to mimic the gable end creates a 'bookend' to the row of semi-detached houses, and benefits the street as a whole. The proposal also hides the blank side wall of the existing house and thus adds interest.

For the above reason we also feel that the proposal does not need to be set back from the existing house, as the gable ends at Blagdon Road area generally forward of the general building line – as in our proposal.

We believe that by proposing a detached dwelling, and by matching the 'book-end' gables as present generally at the ends of rows of semi-detached houses at this end of Blagdon Road, we have overcome the issues raised at pre-app, and have completed in a logical urban design fashion the rhythm that existing along the street.

## EXTERNAL APPEARANCE

The proposal is for a two bedroom detached two storey dwelling on the adjacent land of No 171 Blagdon Road. The external walls will be red brick, hung red tiles and white render. This is to match and respect the other dwellings on Blagdon Road.

The roof will be pitched to match the existing roofs, the tiles will be red concrete pan tiles as this appears to have been the material of choice when the

dwellings were designed and built on the north side of Blagdon Road (please see the neighbourhood/Blagdon Rd elevation). Our proposal will have a positive impact on the on the appearance and character of Blagdon Road, it will mirror the end gable property, No 27 Highmead Close.

## AREA

Gross Internal Area of the proposed dwelling is 85m<sup>2</sup> (42.5m<sup>2</sup> ground floor and 42.5m<sup>2</sup> first floor).

The rear garden area retained for the existing house at nr 171 is 62m<sup>2</sup>, which is in line with amenity space requirements for a 3 bed house – and further amenity space is available at the front of the house.

The rear/ side / front garden proposed for the new corner plot amounts to over 160m<sup>2</sup>.

## HEIGHT

The ridge height of the proposal will be 7.7 metres from the finished floor level. This height is determined by using the same roof pitch as the existing house, and due to the ground floor level being 150mm higher than existing, it is raised 150mm above the existing ridge height – This follows a similar stepping up towards Shinfield Road as on the existing houses, due to the sloping site.

In order to minimise the height, local soil levels will be reduced around the new building with the ground level set below existing soils. Local dwarf retaining walls will be located as required.

## LAYOUT

Please refer to floor and block plans for details.

The proposed dwelling will reduce the size of the existing rear garden to just over 60m<sup>2</sup>, although some further amenity space for the existing dwelling is available to the front.

The new dwelling will benefit from a larger, approx. 160m<sup>2</sup> of private amenity space.

Parking space has been provided as an extension of the existing drive, and the existing dropped kerb and access onto the site will be used for access to both houses.

The dwelling has been laid out with a small entrance hall, leading to open-plan kitchen, dining and lounge, a small utility room with space for plant and W/M is located to provide a lobby to the downstairs wc.

The first floor is accessed via an open staircase leading from the living room to give access to two bedrooms, one of which has an en-suite shower room. A further family bathroom is also proposed on this floor.

The area over the stairs is proposed to have skelining (ceiling fixed to the roof purlins) to provide a better space and allow installation of a rooflight for natural daylight and ventilation.

## IMPACT ON CHARACTER OF THE AREA

Currently 171 Blagdon Road presents a largely blind side wall, and our proposal improves the street scene as it completes the row of houses from Highmead Close to the corner of Hazel Crescent. The creation of the proposed dwelling would be a natural progression of the Blagdon Road Elevation.

The style of the house and materials will be chosen to match the existing materials present at nr 171 Blagdon Road, in order for the new dwelling to blend in with the street scene.

Sufficient separation distance of over 20m is achieved between the proposed dwelling and the houses behind at Hazel Crescent. An existing tree further helps to shield the rear of the house, and obscure glazing is proposed at first floor windows to the rear to prevent impact on privacy of the adjoining amenity space.

## CLIMATE CHANGE: POLICY DM1

The adaptability of the proposal to deal with climate change has been considered and addressed where possible. The bedrooms and the ground floor lounge/kitchen and dining area will have excellent natural day lighting. The building may be naturally ventilated because it is only a small dwelling. Although mechanical ventilation with heat recovery will be considered in order to reduce the carbon footprint.

The dwelling will achieve solar gains from East facing windows in the morning, which is ideal, and this will reduce the heating requirement of the property. The dwelling will be equipped with rainwater harvesting in the form of water butts for maintenance of the garden and plants (a grey water harvesting system maybe be considered by the client also, for flushing of wc's). High levels of insulation will be used in the walls and roof, ensuring an energy efficient property that will meet the needs of the owner.



Flood Map (the red square on the right represents the site)

## IMPACT ON NEIGHBOURS

There will be no overlooking from the ground floor units to the neighbouring gardens, as there is an existing 1800mm high timber fencing on the North side of the proposed dwelling. The client is also proposing to plant a line of bamboo plants in order to provide an additional layer of privacy on the North side of his garden.

The nearest affected property is No 34 Hazel Crescent which is more than 20m away from the furthest extent of northwest corner of our proposal. Consequently this complies with policy DM4. There is no significant impact on access to sunlight and daylight either. This was recognised and satisfied John Gregory , the Planning Officer at Pre-app stage.

The northeast and southeast bathroom windows are obscured glazed to ensure the privacy of the occupants as well as the neighbours.

## ACCESS

The proposed dwelling is accessed from the street via the existing opening in the hedge running along the front of both the existing and proposed properties. Levels rise up from the road level to the front door, but the new front door will have level access to comply with Part M.

Vehicular access will be via Blagdon Road via the existing driveway, across a dropped kerb. The existing drive will be widened and enlarged generally to allow for the additional parking space to serve the new dwelling.

## PARKING

The existing property (171 Blagdon Road) has one existing parking space. For the proposed dwelling which is a similar in size to the existing property we intend to provide one additional parking space.

RBC Parking Standards, state that a two bedroom house should have a maximum of 1.5 parking spaces in Zone Three. However, due to the availability of very good public transport links to the City Centre and bus station on nearby Shinfield Road, and the fact that the town centre is within easy cycling distance we trust that the single additional parking space would be acceptable. This is also in line with RBC's desire to reduce reliance on car transport.

## REFUSE & BICYCLE STORAGE

The existing driveway will be extended to accommodate a small area for Refuse & recycling bins. Bicycle Storage is proposed in a garden shed providing space for 2 bikes. (see Block Plan).

It is expected that bins will be brought onto the pavement on bin collection days as is currently the case.

## LANDSCAPING

The building is set below the existing garden level to reduce the impact of the building. A small retaining wall will be introduced where required. Further landscaping will include a patio at the floor level of the new house (ie sunken in relation to the existing garden levels) a bicycle shed and space for one additional car on a driveway shared between the houses.

## DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED WITH THE APPLICATION

- 2662 001      Design & access statement, including a construction method statement
- 2652 01      site location plan
- 2652 07      block plan
- 2652 09      street elevation and OS plan
  
- 2652 10      GA plans, elevations
- CIL forms 1 and 8
- Planning Form (via planning portal)



## CONSTRUCTION METHODOLOGY STATEMENT

### a) The parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors

Sufficient parking will be provided on the triangular site. The site is more than 160m<sup>2</sup>, excluding the external gross area of the proposed building. This will eliminate the need for parking on Blagdon Road or other surrounding roads.

### b) Loading and unloading of plant and materials

All major deliveries to site will be via the current site access.

Plant and materials will be unloaded in the designated area within the site boundary (on the triangular vacant land). Vehicles will not be allowed to create an obstruction on Blagdon Road.

Vehicles arriving unexpectedly and unable to park in the designated area will be directed to a holding area and called in when space is available.

### c) Storage of plant and materials used in constructing the proposed dwelling

Safe and secure plant and material storage areas will be utilised. The site compound will be sub-divided into trade specific sections, and will facilitate the safe segregation of materials (flammable/non-flammable, etc). The site has a secure timber fence on the northwest and northeast sides. Heavy thick hedges on southeast boundary forms a natural and safe barrier (please see street view of the existing site, on page 1).

### d) The erection and maintenance of security hoarding including decorative displays, where appropriate

The site will be surrounded by the appropriate hoarding, or heras fencing, to ensure that it is kept secure and the public are unable to gain access. Existing fencing will be used at the rear and the existing boundary hedge will be retained at the front.

Barriers on or abutting the highway will comply with Chapter 8 of the Dept. Transport Traffic Signs Manual. The Contractor is aware that a Hoarding Licence must be obtained from RBC Highways Dept.

### e) Wheel washing facilities

Where necessary wheel wash facilities are to be provided on site and the provision of hard standing areas on site will reduce the possible egress of materials on to the road. The road will be inspected, and if necessary, cleaned up after exits from site.

### f) Measures to control the emission of dust and dirt during construction

Wherever possible dust from the construction will be minimised through off-site pre-fabrication. Where this is not possible operations will be carried out in a designated area using dust extraction and filters on the cutting tools. Any dusty operations i.e. stone or brick cutting require local screening or the activities may be limited to certain areas or time periods in order to limit impacts. Dusty materials stockpiles and dusty activities such as stone cutting and grinding to be sited away from the site boundary and/or effectively screened where practicable

Regular damping down and the use of suitable screens to prevent dust spreading will keep dust creation during demolition etc. to a minimum. Dust will be regularly cleared up using suitable vacuum devices. Sweeping, which tends to spread dust, will be avoided where possible. Any land clearing activities including excavation and ground breaking will be "damped down" using water suppression particularly in dry weather. In wet weather greater attention to be paid to ensuring any vehicles onsite do not traffic debris onto local roads. Loaded lorries and skips will be covered with netting/sheeting, and the wheels of all vehicles/plant leaving site will be cleaned so that dirt is not spread onto the surrounding roads. Drop heights, when loading and unloading materials, would be minimised.

### g) A scheme for recycling waste resulting from the construction programme

A scheme will be implemented with the contractor's waste collection sub-contractor to sort all waste in to different piles and these will be recycled where possible. All skips collected from site are subject to sorting at their recycling station

