

Design & Access Statement

95 Ashampstead Rd, Reading, RG30 3LB

1. Introduction

This Design and Access Statement (DAS) has been prepared in support of a full planning application for the comprehensive renovation, extension, and upgrade of the existing end-terrace dwelling at **95 Ashampstead Rd, Reading, RG30 3LB**.

The proposal seeks to transform the existing 2-bedroom end-terrace house into a high-quality, sustainable 4-bedroom family home, including the erection of:

- Front porch extension
- Two-storey side extension
- Single-storey rear extension
- Loft conversion
- Detached rear garden studio/annex (gym/office use ancillary to main dwelling)

The scheme is not speculative development but a long-term family home designed to meet evolving household needs while enhancing architectural quality, sustainability, and overall site value.

2. Site Context & Surroundings

95 Ashampstead Rd is an **end-terrace residential property** situated within an established suburban area of Reading characterised by:

- Two-storey terraced and semi-detached houses
- Modest front gardens and rear garden plots
- Mixed hard and soft landscaping
- Incremental domestic extensions within the street

There are several existing precedents within the immediate area including:

- Two-storey side extensions
- Rear extensions
- Loft conversions with dormers
- Porch additions

These precedents establish a clear pattern of residential enlargement and provide contextual support for the scale and nature of the proposed development.

3. Existing Site Parameters

- **Total Site Area:** 315 m²
- **Existing Building Footprint:** 45 m²
- **Existing Softscape:** 130 m²
- **Existing Hardscape:** 140 m²
- **Existing Parking:** 1 space

The property currently underutilises the full potential of the generous end-plot location.

4. Proposed Development

The proposal comprises a comprehensive functional and aesthetic upgrade including:

Extensions & Alterations

- Front porch addition improving entrance hierarchy
- Two-storey side extension forming additional bedrooms and circulation space
- Single-storey rear extension enlarging kitchen/living/dining space
- Loft conversion providing additional bedroom accommodation
- Detached rear garden studio/annex for gym/office use (ancillary)

Proposed Site Parameters

- **Total Site Area:** 315 m²
- **Total Proposed Building Footprint:** 140 m²
 - Main House: 95 m²
 - Studio/Annex: 45 m²
- **Proposed Hardscape:** 105 m²
- **Proposed Softscape:** approx. 70 m²
- **Proposed Parking:** 3 spaces

The proposal rationalises outdoor space to improve functionality while maintaining meaningful garden provision.

5. Design Principles

5.1 Amount

The increase in footprint and volume has been carefully considered against:

- Plot size
- Established street character
- Local design guidance
- Residential amenity standards

The scale is proportionate to the end-terrace plot and reflects similar extensions in the surrounding area.

5.2 Layout

The internal layout is reorganised to create:

- A functional 4-bedroom family home
- Improved circulation
- Open-plan family living at ground floor
- Clear separation between private and shared spaces

The rear studio remains ancillary and supports modern hybrid working and wellbeing needs.

Externally, parking is rationalised at the front, while maintaining a usable and functional rear garden area.

5.3 Scale & Massing

- The two-storey side extension aligns with existing ridge and eaves heights.
- The rear extension remains subordinate in scale.
- The loft conversion is sensitively integrated within the existing roof form.
- The garden studio is single-storey and positioned to avoid visual dominance.

The massing respects neighbouring properties and maintains a coherent streetscape rhythm.

5.4 Appearance & Materials

The design adopts a contextual architectural language:

- Materials reflecting surrounding brick tones
- Roof tiles matching existing palette
- Proportional window rhythm consistent with street character

Contemporary detailing is introduced subtly through:

- Slim-profile glazing
- Modern entrance treatment
- Clean architectural lines

The balance of traditional form with modern refinement ensures visual integration while elevating design quality.

6. Residential Amenity

The design has been carefully developed to prevent:

- Overlooking of neighbouring gardens
- Overshadowing or loss of daylight
- Overbearing visual impact

Window placement, extension depth, and roof design have been modelled to comply with standard daylight, separation, and privacy guidance.

The proposal enhances the living standards of the occupants without detriment to adjoining properties.

7. Sustainability & Environmental Performance

The project delivers substantial thermal and environmental improvements including:

- Full fabric upgrade (walls, floors, roof insulation improvements)
- High-performance glazing
- Airtightness improvements
- Energy-efficient heating systems
- Low-energy lighting
- Potential for solar PV integration
- Water-efficient sanitary fittings

The development significantly improves energy efficiency compared to the existing dwelling and aligns with sustainable residential design principles.

8. Access

8.1 Vehicular Access

Existing access is retained and enhanced to provide:

- 3 off-street parking spaces
- Improved manoeuvrability

8.2 Pedestrian Access

The new porch enhances:

- Entrance legibility
- Weather protection
- Security and accessibility

Internal layouts consider safe and logical circulation.

9. Landscaping

The proposal restructures external areas to:

- Provide functional hardstanding for parking
- Maintain usable garden space
- Introduce soft landscaping to soften built form

Although softscape reduces numerically from existing levels, the space is rationalised to remain practical and visually balanced.

10. Compliance with Design Guidance

The proposed footprint, site coverage, and spatial reconfiguration have been calculated in accordance with:

- Local design guidance
- Residential amenity standards
- Standard measurement conventions

All calculations are based on architectural design drawings prepared in accordance with accepted planning methodology.

11. Conclusion

The proposed development at 95 Ashampstead Rd:

- Transforms an underperforming 2-bed dwelling into a high-quality 4-bed family home
- Reflects established extension precedents within the street
- Enhances architectural character
- Improves thermal and environmental performance
- Provides functional outdoor space and adequate parking
- Protects neighbouring residential amenity

The scheme represents a carefully considered, contextually sensitive, and sustainable long-term investment in the property and the local streetscape.

Planning Statement Addendum

1. Purpose of this Addendum

This Planning Statement Addendum accompanies the Design & Access Statement and sets out how the proposed development accords with:

- **Reading Borough Local Plan (Adopted November 2019)** and relevant strategic and development management policies; and
- **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – December 2024 (amended 7 February 2025).**

The application relates to an **end-terrace dwelling** and proposes: front porch, two-storey side extension, single-storey rear extension, loft conversion, and a detached rear garden studio/annex (ancillary gym/office).

2. Development Plan and Material Considerations

In accordance with section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the application should be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Reading Local Plan confirms this approach and the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Material considerations of direct relevance include the Council's adopted SPDs:

- **Design Guide to House Extensions SPD (Adopted March 2021)** (supplementing Local Plan Policy H9)
- **Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (Adopted December 2019)** (supporting Policy CC2)
- **Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD (Adopted October 2011)** (supporting policy approach to parking and EV charging)

3. Relevant Reading Local Plan Policies and Assessment

3.1 Principle of Development: House Extensions & Ancillary Accommodation (Policy H9)

Policy H9 supports householder extensions where they:

- respect the character of the host dwelling (scale, location, materials, design);
- respect the character/pattern of neighbouring properties and the street;
- avoid overbearing impact / blank façades; and
- do not result in loss of biodiversity within gardens.

It also supports **ancillary accommodation** (e.g., annex) where it **would not be capable of operating as a separate dwelling**.

Assessment:

- The proposal is designed as a coherent upgrade of an end-terrace property, reflecting local precedents for porches, side/rear extensions and loft conversions.
- The garden studio/annex is expressly **ancillary** (gym/office) and is intended to remain functionally linked to the main dwelling, aligning with H9's requirements.

3.2 Design Quality & Local Character (Policy CC7)

Policy CC7 requires **high-quality design** that enhances character, supports community, and positively addresses environmental issues, assessed across characteristics including context and identity.

Assessment:

- The scheme uses a contextual approach: matching/complimentary materials and massing to the host and street, with modest modern detailing to reflect contemporary living and sustainability.
- As an end-terrace plot, the side extension is formed and composed to read as subordinate and integrated, rather than visually dominant.

3.3 Amenity Protection (Policy CC8)

Policy **CC8** resists development causing a detrimental impact on residential amenity including privacy/overlooking, sunlight/daylight, visual dominance, outlook and disturbance. It also notes the importance of habitable room and window positioning and refers to typical separation expectations.

Assessment:

- The design has been developed to avoid overlooking and overbearing impacts through careful placement of openings, massing, and single-storey elements to the rear.
- The proposal's intent is a long-term family home with a balanced, neighbourly layout and appropriate boundary interface.

3.4 Sustainable Design / Retrofit and Efficient Use of Resources (Policy CC2)

Policy **CC2** applies to both **new development and refurbishment of existing building stock**, requiring design and layouts that use resources efficiently and take account of climate change.

Assessment:

- The proposal is a deep upgrade and modernization of existing housing stock, improving thermal performance and reducing operational energy demand through fabric-first measures and efficient systems (as set out within the DAS sustainability section), aligned with CC2's objectives.

3.5 Climate Change Adaptation (Policy CC3)

Policy **CC3** requires measures to adapt to climate change, including mitigating overheating and managing surface water (e.g., green infrastructure and resilient design measures where feasible).

Assessment:

- The proposal increases functional landscaping quality and can incorporate practical adaptation measures (e.g., shading strategy, ventilation approach, and improved drainage design where appropriate) consistent with CC3 principles.

3.6 Parking, Cycle Parking & EV Charging (Policy TR5 + Parking SPD)

Policy **TR5** requires parking provision appropriate to accessibility and supports EV charging for new houses with off-street parking.

The Council's **Parking SPD** provides residential parking standards by zone and bedroom count (e.g., **4+ bed houses: 2–3 spaces depending on zone**).

Assessment:

- The scheme proposes **3 off-street spaces**, improving on the existing single space and reducing pressure on-street.
- EV charging can be incorporated alongside the off-street provision, aligning with TR5's direction of travel.

3.7 Private Outdoor Space / Green Infrastructure (Policy H10 + links to CC7/CC3)

Policy **H10** seeks functional private/communal outdoor amenity areas, and the Local Plan links green infrastructure delivery through private green space (H10), landscaping (CC7), and tree planting/adaptation (CC3).

Assessment:

- While hard/soft landscaping balances change, the proposal retains meaningful private amenity space and rationalises external areas to support family use, parking, and a high-quality garden environment.

4. Compliance with Reading SPDs (Material Considerations)

- **Design Guide to House Extensions SPD (2021):** confirms it is a material consideration, supplements Policy H9, and guides acceptable householder design outcomes (scale, form, street character, neighbour impacts).
- **Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (2019):** supports Local Plan sustainability ambitions and provides guidance for delivering energy and resource efficiency.
- **Parking Standards SPD (2011):** sets out zone-based parking standards (including for 4+ bed houses).

5. National Planning Policy Framework Assessment (NPPF)

5.1 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

The NPPF sets a presumption in favour of sustainable development as a core decision-making principle.

5.2 Efficient Use of Land (Chapter 11)

The NPPF promotes effective use of land while ensuring safe and healthy living conditions.

Assessment:

The proposal optimises an existing residential plot (end-terrace) to meet family needs and improve quality and performance without creating an unacceptable form of development.

5.3 Achieving Well-Designed Places (Chapter 12)

The NPPF states that good design is fundamental and decisions should ensure development functions well, is visually attractive, sympathetic to local character, optimises site potential, and secures a high standard of amenity.

Assessment:

The scheme is context-led, uses a coherent architectural language, and is designed to protect neighbour amenity while materially improving the dwelling's function, appearance and environmental performance.

5.4 Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation (Chapter 14)

The NPPF supports the transition to net zero and encourages reuse/upgrade of existing buildings. It requires that the need to mitigate and adapt to climate change is considered in preparing and assessing applications.

Assessment:

This is fundamentally a **retrofit and upgrade** project with fabric and performance improvements, consistent with national objectives to improve existing building stock and reduce emissions.

6. Conclusion

The proposal accords with the development plan and relevant material considerations. In particular, it aligns with:

- **H9** (extensions + ancillary accommodation that cannot operate as a separate dwelling)
- **CC7** (high-quality, context-led design)
- **CC8** (protecting neighbouring amenity)
- **CC2 / CC3** (sustainable design and climate adaptation)
- **TR5 + Parking SPD** (appropriate parking provision and EV charging direction)
- **NPPF** objectives for **good design, efficient land use, and climate response**.

Prepared By

Tomas Gurcinas, MCIOB

BA (Hons) Architecture

BSc Interior Design

Emperus Group Limited

Email: emperusgroup@gmail.com

Tel: 07738 968951

www.emperusarchitecture.co.uk