

Planning and Building Control
Gedling Borough Council
Arnot Hill Park
Arnold
Nottingham
NG5 6LU

25th January 2021

Dear Sir or Madam

133 - 137 Breck Hill Road, Woodthorpe, Notts

Two dwellings and proposed rear extension (ground and first floor) at No. 133

This letter has been prepared to accompany a set of amended application drawings.

We trust this letter can be treated as a *'Design and Access Statement'* for the purposes of formal 'validation'.

Context

The application site has the benefit of an extant planning consent for two dwellings and proposed rear extension (ground and first floor) at No. 133, granted under reference 2020/0294.

The purpose of the current (enclosed) application is to seek a 'variation' of Condition 4 attached to 2020/0294 so that it refers to an amended set of drawings.

The amendments / changes relate to:

- The addition of a first floor rear balcony to each of the two new dwellings;
- The addition of a second (loft) floor rear window to each of the two new dwellings; and
- The addition of a porch over the front door of each of the two new dwellings.

Residential Amenity

The addition of a first floor balcony and second (loft) floor bedroom window increases the level of amenity to be enjoyed by the future occupiers of each property.

The proposed balcony will enable the occupiers to actually '*sit out in the sun*' and enjoy a '*cup of tea or coffee*' in a pleasant outdoor environment.

Each balcony has been purposefully designed with a 1.8m high obscure privacy glass 'screen' at either end to prevent direct neighbour overlooking – as identified on the application drawings enclosed.

The second (loft) floor bedroom window will enable a far greater amount of natural sun light to reach the approved loft bedroom and will also provide pleasant views to the east.

The properties already have rear windows at first floor level that were deemed acceptable to Gedling Borough Council.

Regarding neighbour amenity, a copy of the Council's Delegated Officer Report produced at the time is attached and states,

'Given the depths of the development plots and the separation distances between the proposed dwellings and those to the rear on Bonnington Road of circa 50m. I am satisfied that the proposal would not result in undue overlooking from windows to the rear elevations of the proposed dwellings.'

We trust, therefore, that a similar planning assessment will be made by Gedling BC when considering the proposed addition of the second (loft) floor windows.

Design

The character and appearance of the development was a key consideration at the time of the original planning application (2020/0294).

However, both the proposed balconies and the second (loft) floor windows are at the rear of the properties and are not street facing / in public view. The effect these proposed design changes can have on the character of the development are therefore limited.

Taking into account that the proposed changes will increase the level of amenity enjoyed by the future occupiers of each property, we consider that a refusal of planning permission on design grounds would be wholly unreasonable in this instance.

Regarding the proposed porches, if you turn back to the attached original Delegated Officer Report, it states,

'The proposed development would also now significantly improve the visual amenity of the area by bringing back into a viable use a currently long standing untidy and overgrown area of land in this residential area.'

The addition of a porch over the front door of each new dwelling will, in our view, further improve the visual amenity of the area and street scene along Breck Hill Road.

Porches also provide a practical improvement to the way in which these dwellings can be occupied in that they provide shelter in bad weather when, for example, *'unloading food shopping from a car'*.

The submitted application drawings propose no other changes to the appearance of the development when viewed from Breck Hill Road (i.e. "the front").

Planning Policy

The Council's adopted Local Plan promotes sustainable development and seeks to create attractive, safe and healthy environments. The Government's NPPF states that high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve and that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development. The NPPF emphasises the need to support sustainable economic growth. The NPPF requires local planning authorities to provide a wide choice of high-quality homes.

Due consideration has been given to ensure that the submitted proposal (see drawings submitted with the application) would not unduly harm the amenity of neighbours or the character and appearance of the area.

It is also clear that the proposal will increase the level of amenity to be enjoyed by the future occupiers of each of the two new dwellings. In fact, for the reasons given above we believe

the proposal would positively enhance this part of Woodthorpe by delivering new quality family homes that showcase dedicated outdoor amenity space and '*bright and airy*' living and bedrooms.

At a time when people are spending an increasing amount of the day in their own homes we consider local authorities should be actively encouraging and wholly supportive of schemes which provide high levels of amenity.

The principle of additional residential development on this site is established and it is our considered view that the proposed amendments to the approved scheme would not result in any issues that would warrant a refusal of planning permission.

I hope that an objective assessment of this application will result in planning permission being granted.

I also trust with this information and the application documentation submitted via the planning portal, the application will now be formally 'validated' and progressed favourably to determination.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully

George Machin

**George Machin MTCP MRTPI
Partner**

GRACE | MACHIN

PLANNING & PROPERTY

