

Design & Access Statement

Conversion of existing dwelling into two residential flats at:

11 Shaftesbury Street, High Wycombe, Bucks, HP11 2NA

April 2021

INTRODUCTION & URBAN CONTEXT

This design and access statement has been prepared in support of our application for the extension and conversion of existing dwelling into four residential flats.

EXISTING BUILDING & SURROUNDING AREA

The site is located at 11 Shaftesbury Street, High Wycombe. The application site currently comprises of a 3-bedroom end of terraced dwelling.

The locality is a mix of both residential and commercial buildings. Neighbouring residential dwellings are characterised by two storey properties of a mix nature in terms of building type, architecture and building materials.



Fig 1 View from Shaftesbury Street

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision
20/08297/FUL	Construction of two storey rear extension and conversion of existing dwelling into 2 x 1-bed flats with associated external alterations including bin and cycle store following demolition of existing outbuilding.	Refused

Response to Refusal – application No. 20/08297/FUL

Refusal Reasons:

- 1. By virtue of its size, siting and design, the proposed development is poorly designed and represents an overdevelopment of the application site, which fails to reflect the existing grain of development in the surrounding area. As such this proposal will detract from the character of the area and fails to comply with Policies CP9 (Sense of Place) and DM35 (Placemaking and Design Quality) of the adopted Wycombe District Local Plan (August 2019) and the advice contained in the Council's Residential Design Guide SPD (June 2017).*
- 2. By virtue of its size, siting and design, this proposal is poorly designed and represents an overdevelopment of the application site, in that no provision has been made for open private amenity space for the future occupants of this development. As such this proposal is contrary to Policies CP9 (Sense of Place) and DM35 (Placemaking and Design Quality) of the adopted Wycombe District Local Plan (August 2019) and the advice contained in the Council's Residential Design Guide SPD (June 2017).*
- 3. The application has failed to demonstrate that the proposed development will protect and enhance both biodiversity and green infrastructure features and networks on the site and in the local area. It has also failed to demonstrate whether there are opportunities for tree canopy cover within the site. As such the proposal has failed to demonstrate that it can comply with the requirements of policy DM 34 of the Adopted Wycombe District Local Plan.*

Response to Refusal Reasons

1. The extension is as shown on the drawings 1.35m in depth and 4.3m in width resulting in footprint of with the footprint of 5.8m². The existing outbuilding which is proposed to be demolished is approx. 5.9m (depth) x 5.9m (width)

with footprint of approx. 35m². How can this result in overdevelopment?
With regards to character of the area, the extension is modest and located at the rear and respects the host building, so not sure how this can affect the character of the area.

2. With regards to amenity space the design and access statement showed the availability of open space within 0.1 miles from the application site. However, in the current proposal a first-floor balcony has been added and a communal seating area at the rear has been provided. With regards to poor design, if compared with a recent approval within proximity of the site (App. Ref: 18/07610/FUL), our proposal is very simple and sympathetic to the host building.
3. Had a site visit had been carried out the case officer would have noticed the existing garden is predominantly hard surface (concrete) leading up to the put building. Therefore, the impact on biodiversity is minimal.

Due to the Covid restrictions, there is a possibility a site visit was not carried out by the case officer, as if it was, majority of the concerns in the refusal could have been overcome/addressed by the site visit.

PROPOSAL

The proposal involves the conversion of existing dwelling into two residential units with a small rear extension and associated balcony to the rear of first floor residential flat. If the case officer cannot access the site due to restrictions, he/she can like other case officer request photos.

Design Drivers

- To maintain the street scene along Shaftesbury Street with a proposal that compliments the existing surrounding architecture.
- To create a development that echoes the form and is in keeping with the scale and vocabulary of existing buildings.
- To create a place that is adaptable to the changing needs of its users.

We have considered the existing building and proposed a scheme that has been developed to effectively make use of the site to make the building complete and fit into its surrounding area.

Amount

Bedrooms and living areas have been designed with appropriate size openings for good natural light to be enjoyed.

Flat No.	Unit	Internal Area
Flat 1	1 Bedroom Unit	46.3sqm
Flat 2	1 Bedroom Unit	46sqm

Layout

Flat 1 will be on the ground floor and flat 2 on the first floor.

Appearance

The alterations of the external elevations of the dwelling have been kept to the minimum to preserve the original character of the building.

Landscaping

Both units will have access to communal amenity area at the rear. Flat 2 has a balcony which meets the amenity standards as per the residential design guidance. The prospective residents can have the convenience to easily visit the nearby public open park within walking distance.

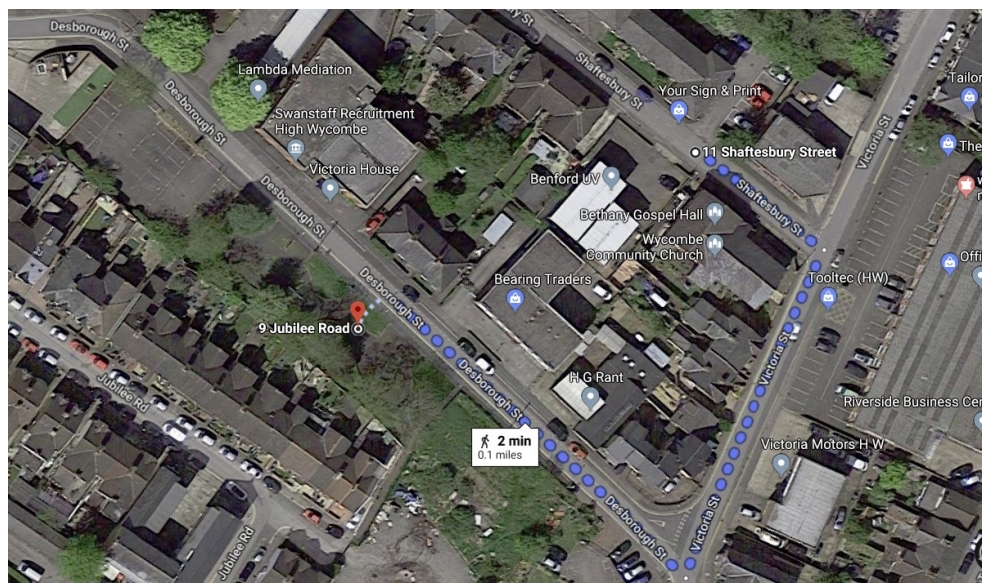


Fig 2 – Distance to open public amenity space (0.1m)

Vehicle Access & Parking

The site benefits from existing x2 parking bays, which will be retained for the flats. A application at 102 Green street (App. Ref: 18/07610/FUL) was approved as two flats without any parking spaces. This site is similarly situated and benefits from close links to local amenities and public transport.

In addition, the proposed development is within a highly sustainable location and occupants of the dwellings have easy access to public transport thus reducing reliance on the private car.

Secure bicycle storage facilities for the flats are provided within the site to promote their use. The surrounding roads are usable for both walking and cycling. The site is easily accessible on foot and the existing road network allows for cycle use.

Refuse Storage

Shared refuse storage area has been provided for the residential units.

CONCLUSION

The design of the extension and conversion is of a high quality and in keeping with the surrounding vernacular style, and the style of the existing house and is thus appropriate for the site. The alterations are predominately to the interior of the property and will therefore not have a detrimental effect on the character of the dwelling.