

**DS Squared Architects**

20039 HHP 01.00

# **Design & Access Statement**

May 2021

IN SUPPORT OF THE PLANNING APPLICATION FOR 22 PARK ROAD,  
WATFORD, WD17 4QN

Erection of a two storey side and two storey rear extension. Demolition and replacement  
of existing freestanding garage.

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## INTRODUCTION PURPOSE OF THIS DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

### INTRODUCTION

This Design & Access Statement has been prepared by DS Squared Architects in respect to 22 Park Road, WD17 4QN in Watford Borough Council. This statement is in support of a Householder Planning Application for a proposed conversion of garage to habitable rooms on the West of the dwelling, new first floor West side extension and part side first floor extension on the East side with two storey rear extension. Replacement new larger detached garage on the East of the application site.

The application site is located in Nascot Conservation Area which lies to the North-West of the town centre.

### PURPOSE OF THIS DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

The purpose of the application is to improve the internal quality of an existing detached house for a better standard of living for an extended family.

The proposal will unify the various developments that have been undertaken to the rear of the site but the precise details of the application proposals are summarised in section "Design Proposal" of this Design and Access Statement.

## LOCATION AND CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

### CHARACTER OF LOCAL AREA

Watford is an urban borough in South West Hertfordshire, on the edge of the East of England region to the North-West of London. It covers an area of 2,142 hectares (8.3 square miles) and is the only non-metropolitan borough wholly contained within the M25 and the largest town in Hertfordshire.

Approximately 20% of the Borough forms part of the Metropolitan Green Belt and this is supplemented by a variety of green, open spaces. Watford's green spaces have been granted more Green Flag awards than anywhere else in Hertfordshire and twelve parks and open spaces in Watford are now recognised by the Green Flag Award Scheme; as some of the very best in the country.

Watford is a compact borough with 96,800 people living within the Borough boundary.

The Borough has excellent transport links with mainline rail connections to London, the Midlands and the North, Underground and Overground connections to central London, its North-West suburbs and the rural Chilterns, community rail connections to St Albans, coach services to Heathrow airport, bus services to Luton airport and convenient road connections via the M1, M25 and A41.

## THE SITE

The subject dwelling currently occupying the site sits as a single large detached property characterised by a tiled roof, cream colour render at the front and back with part painted facing brick and to the rear and side a combination of render and facing brick with sash timber windows.



View from Park Road of front entrance



View of house from rear garden



Aerial view of site and context

The application site sits within a context of predominantly large detached and semi detached houses and date from the late Victorian period. Most of the properties have front gardens/driveways and buildings are usually two or two and a half stories high and sit within large building plots.

## EXISTING PROPERTY

The existing property is an attractively detailed Victorian detached dwelling with well-preserved original features comprising a symmetrically proportioned front façade. The detached property sits on a large sized ground to the rear and front complete with a patio area, summer house and outbuildings.

As well as the integrated garage, cars can be parked on the front drive and detached garage to East.

## THE NEED

The applicant wants to improve the property for their growing family and extended family who are soon to move in. The property has not been renovated and the family have lived at this property for several years. They wish to improve the quality of the home and enjoy the setting of the dwelling.

The existing property is a large footprint but has several levels at first floor level. It is proposed that this will be unified internally with the proposals.

The aim is to provide a cohesive design that reflects and enhances the character whilst respecting Nascot Conservation Area.

## PLANNING HISTORY

Planning History:

On the application site, there has been no previous planning submissions made to the property but 2 applications have been made for works to trees:

- **The reduction of the three sycamores and trimming back of the overhang from the yew and plum situated in the vicarage to trees in a Conservation area.**  
Ref. No: 17/01535/TCA | Status: Tree Works Approved
- **Works to trees in Nascot Conservation Area**  
Ref. No: 15/00977/TCA | Status: Tree Works Approved

## PLANNING STATEMENT

This section summarises the planning policy framework relevant to the design of the application proposed.

For the purposes of Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and section 70 (2) of the Town and Country Planning, the relevant elements of the development plan are the Watford Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 2006-2031 (adopted January 2013) and the saved policies from the Watford District Plan 2000 (adopted December 2003).

The relevant Supplementary Planning Documents are the Residential Design Guide (adopted July 2014) and the Nascot Conservation Area Character Appraisal Document (adopted 2010). These documents are material considerations of significant weight albeit they do not form part of the development plan. It should be noted however that the Character Appraisal pre-dates the publication of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

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## NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK (NPPF)

The NPPF was published in March 2012. It sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The NPPF is a material consideration and must be taken into account in the determination of planning applications. Paragraphs 132, 134 & 135 are most relevant.

The NPPF identifies (at paragraph 7) the three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These three roles are not taken in isolation (paragraph 8) because they are mutually dependent. Economic growth can secure higher social and environmental standards, and well-designed buildings and places can improve the lives of people and communities.

In economic terms the proposals represent investment in the historic fabric of Watford, will require the involvement of building trades and suppliers, and while of modest contribution, the scheme is nevertheless likely to contribute to the local economy.

The proposals help meet this economic component of sustainable development. The social benefit is in keeping the property up to the most modern demands for quality housing in a location that is relatively close to the town centre. The respect the application now pays for the architectural dominance of the main house goes to show how the proposal meets the environmental dimension of the NPPF.

At the heart of the document is the requirement to achieve sustainable development through the planning system. Importantly, the NPPF establishes *"a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking"* (paragraph 14).

The policies contained within paragraph 132-135 are applicable to these proposals and refer to both designated and non-designated heritage assets. In this case the designated asset is the Nascot Conservation Area. The section in this Planning Statement below on the Nascot Conservation Area Character Appraisal SPD elaborates how the application accords with this detailed guidance.

It is considered that the proposals will have a very limited impact in terms of the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The proposed front extensions are set back and subordinate from the main front elevation and, as a result, do not compete with the façade of the host, as shown in the drawings accompanying this Design and Access Statement. In addition, the proposals are subservient to the architectural scale and detailing of the host, in appropriate materials and as shown in the drawings, do not disturb the visual hierarchy of the principal building. As described previously, it is considered that these proposals would give rise to very limited visual impact upon the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. For the purposes of section 66(1) of the 1990 Act, it is considered that the proposals would not have any detrimental impact upon the settings of any Listed Building within the vicinity of the site.

For the purposes of paragraph 134 (where a finding of less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset is found), it is considered that the public benefits arising out of these proposals (in terms of the social, economic and environmental benefits) will outweigh the identified and limited extent of harm.

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## WATFORD LOCAL PLAN PART 1: CORE STRATEGY

Watford's Core Strategy sets out the long-term vision of how Watford, and the places within it, should develop by 2031 and sets out the Council's strategy for achieving that vision. In particular, it identifies the broad locations for delivering housing and other strategic development needs such as employment, retail, leisure, community facilities and other uses.

The relevant policies in the Watford Local Plan Part 1 Core Strategy are:

- SD1 Sustainable Design
- SS1 Spatial Strategy
- UD1 Delivering High Quality Design and
- UD2 Built Heritage Conservation

## OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

There are two Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) relevant to this application. They are the Residential Design Guide and the Nascot Conservation Area Character Appraisal Document.

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## RESIDENTIAL DESIGN GUIDE

The detailed drawings illustrate how the extension has been designed to minimise its impact on the front elevation. This is in accordance with the advice in the Residential Design Guide which explains the need for extensions to be in *"harmony with the host building"* at paragraph 8.2. The details as submitted meet this requirement.

The proposed side extensions provide harmony with the main dwelling at 22 Park Road and architectural detailing of the proposals follow closely the advice in paragraph 8.6 on side extensions and the need for subordination, plan form and proportions. It represents a form of development which meets all of the relevant matters identified in the SPD.

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## NASCOT CONSERVATION AREA

The Nascot Conservation Area Character Appraisal Document describes the important factors which define this Conservation Area. It is described as the first substantial area of Watford developed away from the historic High Street.

*"Nascot Conservation Area was designated on 22 January 2001 and was subsequently extended in November 2001 to include those adjoining areas that contributed positively to the setting of the Conservation Area.*

*Nascot Conservation Area lies to the North-East of Watford Town Centre, between St Albans Road and 4 Nascot Conservation Area Appraisal Hempstead Road. The Conservation Area is divided by the West Coast Mainline, with the bulk of the designated land to the South and a smaller parcel of land to the North. It extends as far North as the Southern stretch of Leavesden Road and as far South as the junction between The Avenue and St Albans Road. The wide expanse of St Albans Road provides a clear*

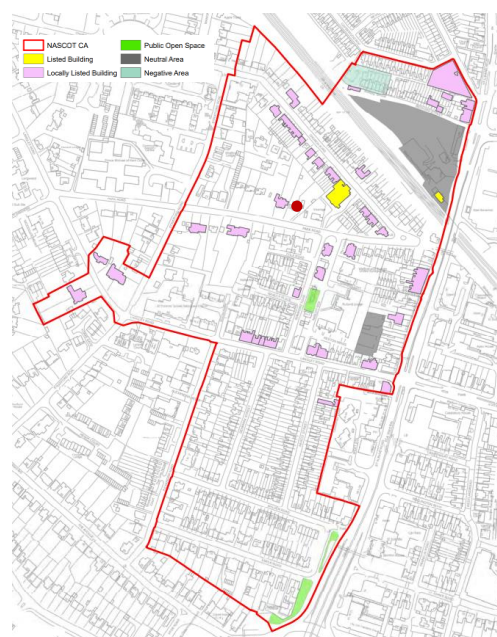


boundary to the Eastern side of the Conservation Area, with the section between 99 St Albans Road and the Malden Road junction excluded due to the loss of much of the historic urban form. The Northern boundary is formed by the railway line and the edge of the nucleus of transport related buildings. The Western boundary is largely formed by the transition along Stratford Road and Alexandra Road from predominantly Victorian buildings to the East, to the more modern buildings to the West. The rear garden boundary line of the houses on Essex Road provides the final significant edge to the Conservation Area – marking a clear transition point between different character areas.

The Conservation Area is remarkable for its terraced cottages such as at Bedford Street, Church Road and Denmark Street. As most of the buildings date from the mid to late nineteenth century and therefore have general similarities in terms of materials and features, there is an overall homogeneity in the area but with punctuation. The dominant urban form comprises terraces of two storey brick buildings with pitched roofs. Nascot also includes a number of detached 'Victorian villas', especially towards its Western side, which are larger and have more elaborate detailing.

The earlier buildings have different characteristics to the later Victorian ones in the Conservation Area and later Victorian extension of the town. They have a simple, hipped roof form with slate covering, rolled lead ridges, and oversailing eaves together with elevations in old London stock bricks. Old London yellow Stocks can also be seen in other properties, such as the Devon House terrace of shops on St Albans Road.

London stocks are the predominant facing brick in the Conservation Area with stone dressing used on a number of buildings; the shades of colour vary from a lighter yellow through to a reddish tone. The dominant roof material is slate or red plain clay tile on the pitched roofs. Most windows are wooden and some sliding sash, but many have been replaced by plastic versions; most are painted white. The materials used for front boundary walls range from brick to stone and flint. Many of them are arranged decoratively and are features that should be retained, particularly where they indicate former plot sizes.”



- Red dot locates application site

## HERITAGE CONSIDERATIONS

As discussed above; but to summarise please note the following;

- The application site is within Nascot Conservation Area
- The proposals will not impact the designated conservation area as the development proposed to the first-floor west side will have very little impact and majority of the remaining development is sited to the rear.
- Many of the large dwellings adjacent to the application site have already been altered and extended; resulting in a mix of dwelling types.
- Therefore, the proposed alterations on the application site will not have any significant impact to the Heritage Assets of Nascot Conservation Area.

Below are some of the locally listed buildings that are in close proximity to the application site:

### CHURCH OF ST ANDREW

Church of St Andrew is a Grade II Listed Building, listed in 1993. The Church was built to serve the needs of the growing population within this part of Watford. The building work on the Church was only continued until 1854, where-upon they came to halt for three years. This was initially due to the lack of funds, all of which had come from donations, but further delays were caused by disputes with the Government. The Church was completed and consecrated in 1857. Extensions to the Church were added to the Church in 1866 (South aisle) and 1872 (North aisle). The Church was remodelled in 1979 to provide a Church hall and various other facilities.

The Church of St Andrew is located to the South West of the application site. The South West boundary edge is heavily vegetated with big trees and shrubbery. In addition to this, it is important to note that the rear of the application site is located to the rear and flank of the Church, thus the proposed rear extensions will have very minimal, if any, impact on the view from the Church.

### LOCALLY LISTED BUILDINGS

As part of the Council's Urban Conservation Strategy, a number of local buildings were listed in the Register of Locally Listed Buildings. These buildings were included in the list because of their *"importance in terms of architectural interest, function, historical interest, landmark quality and streetscape quality"* (Nascot Conservation Area Appraisal). Most notably, the closest listed building to the application site is the adjacent building at 30 Park Road. It is also worth mentioning that due to the appearance and quality of the dwelling at 22 Park Road, it is not considered for local listing although it is considered to positively contribute to the character of the area despite not meeting the criteria for local listing. It is a reflection of the age, style and materials that act as reminders of the gradual development of the town. The proposals will therefore improve both the quality and appearance of the dwelling.

## DESIGN PROPOSAL

The new proposals are intended to fully acknowledge and respond to the character and quality of Nascot Conservation area and the specific qualities of 22 Park Road. These have informed the formulation of the proposals particularly in respect of the scale, form, bulk, height and appearance of the extensions. The detailed design results in a proposal which is well set back from the front elevation with a lower ridge height. This does not elongate the front elevation but helps to retain the appearance and width of the front elevation, which in turn, reinforces the symmetry of 22 Park Road. In regards to the proposed rear elevations, the design proposals unify and harmonise the piecemeal developments that have been carried out in the past.

As set out in the Residential Design Guide, *“extensions must respect the character and scale of the host building”* and to achieve this, careful attention has been put into making sure that the size and shape, roof pitch, materials, scale of windows and doors and the details of the proposed extensions compliment that of the original building:

**Size and Shape:** The proposed side extensions are well set back from the front façade and act as being subordinate to the main building. This is also reinforced by the considerably lower ridge line of the extensions. The proposed rear elevations follow the same ridge level as the side extensions and do not disturb the sunlight and privacy of the adjacent building at 30 Park Road.

**Roof Pitch:** The proposed extensions follow the same pitch and angle of the host property as well as a similar roof form as the original roof.

**Materials:** The proposed external materials that will be used are to match the existing brick, render and roof tiles of the host building.

On the front elevation the existing painted brick sections will be jet washed to expose the original bricks; London Stock, reinstating the original Victorian architectural style of the property. The adjacent dwelling is a good example of this detail.

**Scale of windows and doors:** Position of doors and windows have been carefully considered to avoid any overlooking and maintain privacy between 22 and 30 Park Road. Amenity considerations are explained in more detail in the ‘Amenity Consideration’ section below.

**Details:** Chimneys have been reinstated into the proposed extensions to reflect the original look of the property.

It is also important to note that the proposed extensions respect the scale and character of the properties within the street scene as a whole.

As supporting evidence for the above alterations/proposals we enclose the following:

- 20039 HHP 01.01 – Existing Plans, Elevations and Location Plan
- 20039 HHP 02.01 – Proposed Plans
- 20039 HHP 02.02 – Proposed Garage Plans, Elevations and Section
- 20069 HHP 04.01 – Proposed Elevations

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## SCALE AND LAYOUT

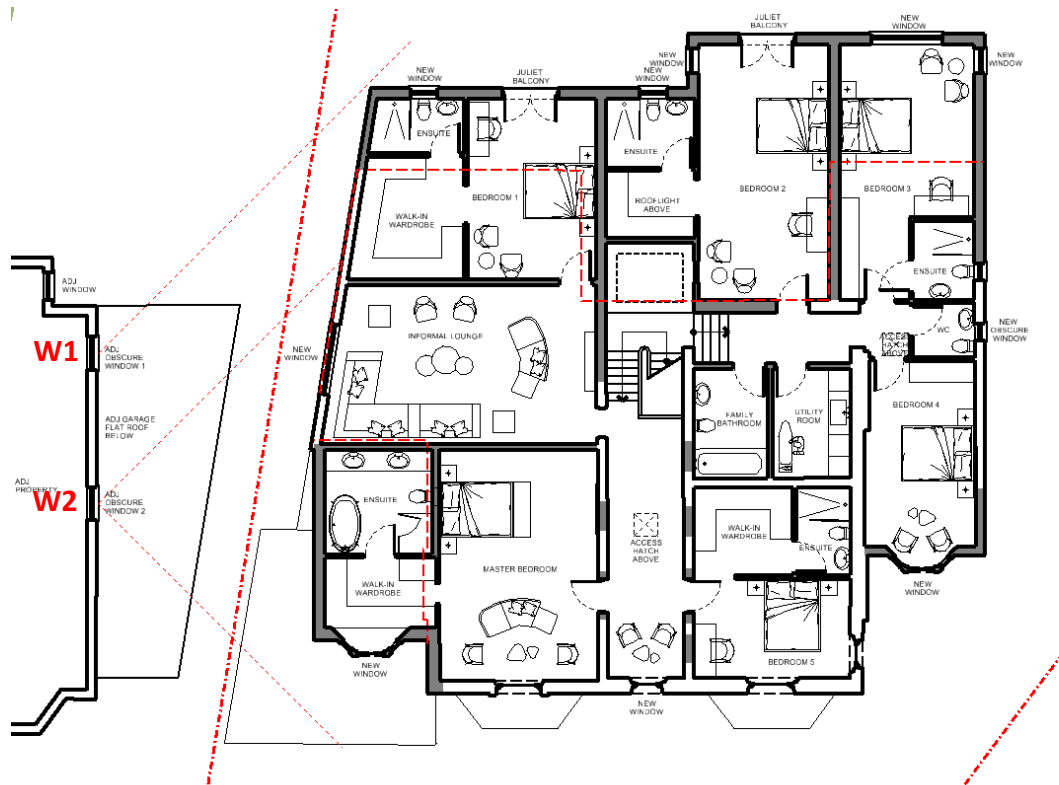
The included drawings demonstrate how the proposed redevelopment will be integrated within the site.

The proposals have been carefully considered to ensure the scale of the development works with the site. The relationship of the proposal with neighbouring buildings is conducive to the surrounding urban context within which it is to be placed.

The detailed design results in side extensions which are well set back from the front elevation with a lower ridge height and rear extensions which do not disturb the sunlight levels to the adjacent properties, especially that at 30 Park Road, and *“ensures that there is no significant loss of privacy to neighbouring houses or gardens”* (paragraph 7.3.16 in the Residential Design Guide).

## AMENITY CONSIDERATIONS

As briefly mentioned above, careful considerations have been paid to make sure that the proposals do not impact upon the amenity of the adjacent properties, especially that at 30 Park Road. To achieve this, the proposed west first floor rear extension has been assessed using the 45 degree rule as shown in the drawing below. As seen below, the proposed extension does not cross the 45 degree line projected from the centre point of the adjacent obscure window.



The Residential Design Guide also explains that the proposed extensions must ensure that there will be “no significant loss of privacy to neighbouring houses or gardens” (paragraph 7.3.16). The windows at first floor level of the property at 30 Park Road on the East elevation are obscure windows and thus, no privacy will be lost as a result of the proposed window in the informal lounge on the West elevation of 22 Park Road. For Window 1 (as per the drawing above), it is assumed that that window is a bedroom window and that this bedroom has a further bay window to the rear. For Window 2, it is assumed as being a landing window. The overall impact of the side and front extension on the West flank will have no impact on the privacy of 30 Park Road.

It also worth mentioning that the distance between on first floor level between the windows of 22 and 30 Park Road is approximately 6.5m.

It is also proposed that a replacement garage will be develop. The current garage is run down and is need of upgrade. The applicant requires the secure space to holds up to 4 cars and as a result of a new pitched room, some storage and amenity space will be created within the roof structure.

## LANDSCAPING

The existing landscaping to the front and rear of the property will be retained as will the existing fence.

## PRECEDENT ON PARK ROAD

The majority of the properties on Park Road have different architectural styles and differing time periods. The application site and that of the adjacent property are of Victoria era and style. As noted above, the intention is to remove the paint of the painted brick so that the original London Stock brick can be reinstated providing an elegant front elevation to match the neighbouring property at 30 Park Road. The two properties will provide local interest in the Nascot Conservation Area.

Moving away from these properties the dwellings are of modest design and appear to be newer homes that lack any architectural merit.

A number of properties on Park Road have wide front elevations, for example numbers 35, 35A and 39 as noted below with side elements to the properties.



It therefore considered that the additions to the side of the application site will not look out of place and together with an element of symmetry, the proposal do not detract from the principal elevation of the original dwelling, architectural style will read subordinate to the host property.

## CONCLUSION

DS Squared Architects believe that the proposed design is an appropriate response to the constraints and opportunities presented by the site and the surrounding area whilst remaining compliant to council requirements.

This Design & Access Statement demonstrate that the main aim of the application is to create a well-designed, low impact scheme of development.

The associated impact has been carefully considered to minimise the effect it has on Nascot Conservation Area, the host building and on the adjacent properties, most notably 30 Park Road. The proposed materials and detailing of the proposed extensions respect that of the existing house, neighbouring properties and the overall character of the Conservation Area. In addition, it is considered that the impact of the proposal is outweighed by the social, economic and environmental benefits brought about through an increased investment in the historic fabric, labour and trade, beneficial residential social performance of the property and improved environmental performance of the host building.

The proposals thus deserve the support of the council in planning terms and can be permitted having regard to the provisions of the local council's development plan and all other material circumstances whilst grasping and respecting the fundamentals of the adjacent vernacular architecture.

The proposed alterations to the building have been carefully and sensitively designed to provide a high-quality development that responds positively to the local context and will have a positive impact on street aesthetics to enhance the street scene along 22 Park Road.

DS Squared Architects is of the opinion that with all these features the proposal deserves the support of the council in planning terms and will be a great addition and enhancement to the street.

APENDIX 1 – EXISTING PHOTOS

