

COMBINED PLANNING/DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT FOR THE ERECTION OF A SINGLE STOREY REAR EXTENSION, INSTALLATION OF REPLACEMENT WINDOWS AND RE-ALIGNMENT OF FRONT WALL WITH NEW GATES AT 24 THE PARADE, EPSOM

1. Introduction

1.1 This document has been prepared by Beacon Hill Planning for the erection of a single storey rear extension, replacement windows and re-alignment of the front wall with front gates to the residential property at 24 The Parade, Epsom. The site relates to a semi-detached property with off street parking in the Church Street Conservation Area (CA).

2. Relevant planning history

2.1 23/00820/CAT – removal of holly tree; six-week date expired and works carried out (see **appendix 1**)

3. Planning policy update

3.1 The original National Planning Policy Framework was published by Central Government in March 2012 and was an important material consideration in the determination and assessment of all planning applications. In September 2023 the Government published its revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied.

3.2 The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. There are three aspects that comprise this goal:

- an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;

- a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being; and
- an environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

3.3 Achieving sustainable development involves seeking positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment, as well as in people’s quality of life, including (but not limited to): moving from a net loss of biodiversity to achieving net gains for nature; improving the conditions in which people work; widening the choice of high quality homes; securing high quality design; supporting the transition to a low carbon future; contributing to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and reducing pollution; and improving the health, social and cultural well-being for all.

3.4 The Government’s planning policies on design are set out in section 12 of the Framework. The initial paragraph of the section states that *“the creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.”*

3.5 Paragraph 127 advocates that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

“a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;

b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;

c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change.”

d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;

e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and

f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience”.

4. The proposal

4.1 The application is for a single storey rear extension, replacement windows and a new front boundary wall and gates.

5. Analysis

5.1 Being situated in the CA, special attention must be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area, as required by section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Paragraph 199 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that when considering the impact of a development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation. This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

5.2 The CA appraisal notes that it is one of the Borough's most important conservation areas and is notable for its prestigious houses, which were built when Epsom developed as a spa town in the late 17th century. The appeal property itself is part of a semi-detached pair with ground floor bay windows, built from brick with a driveway and garage to the side and a small front garden.

5.3 Being situated at the rear, the ground floor element would not be visible from the public domain. It would be low level in nature and subservient to the host building, with a flat roof and clad in sympathetic materials.

5.4 It is consequently submitted that the extension would not appear large or dominant within the context of the existing dwelling and the locality, with a number of other houses in the locale having been extended in a similar fashion. Given the screening provided by the boundary planting around the curtilage, it is unlikely that the proposal would have a significant effect on the surrounding neighbourhood.

5.5 With regard to residential amenity it is submitted that given the separation distances to neighbouring houses and existing boundary treatments there would be no undue harm in respect of loss of light, privacy or overbearing effects.

5.6 The single garage and driveway would be retained and as such there would be no loss of parking provision on the site as a result of the proposals. If necessary a landscaping condition can be imposed to enhance the appearance of the front garden area.

5.7 The replacement windows to the house and new glazing to the extension would be aluminium casements, with details accompanying the application particulars (page 4-5 of Vevo brochure). The building is of 1980s construction (so is not as significant in heritage terms as others in the CA) and it retains the single glazed windows from that era. Such casements are the main contributing factor of a lower than desirable, ecologically unsound, EPC value. The new aluminium frames would be virtually indistinguishable from the present windows from public views, and the R value will be greatly enhanced above and over the existing. It is therefore considered that the openings would be in keeping with the existing building and the wider CA.

5.8 Should aluminium still be deemed unacceptable despite the above arguments please could the case officer make contact prior to determination.

5.9 The existing wall was underpinned by the holly tree that has recently been removed from the frontage (removal reference 23/00820/CAT). Some work has been undertaken in the past to repair the wall due to the tree. It is proposed to re-align the front wall, which would be set against the back-edge of the adjacent public footpath. The new gates would be low level and appear similar to the image below:



<https://www.ruby-group.co.uk/products/cottage-3-4-t-g-entrance-gate-pair?variant=39531062329407>

5.10 It is submitted that the new arrangement would be sympathetic to the character and appearance of the residence and the wider CA. Conditions can be imposed in respect of precise materials and new soft landscaping and planting.

5.11 For information, the ageing fence on the common boundary with the footpath to the west of the site is to be replaced as part of the maintenance of the land and will further benefit the overall appearance of the site and surrounds.

5.12 Please contact the agent should there be any concerns during the course of the application and prior to any decision.