

20<sup>h</sup> October 2023

Woking Borough Council  
Civic Officers  
Floor 1  
Gloucester Square  
Woking  
GU21 6YL

Dear Sir / Madam,

**RE: ERECTION OF A FIRST FLOOR EXTENSION TO PROVIDE A 1.5 STOREY DWELLING, TOGETHER WITH A SINGLE STOREY REAR EXTENSION, FOLLOWING THE DEMOLITION OF THE EXISTING CONSERVATROY AT 56 LOWER GUILDFORD ROAD, KNAPHILL, WOKING, SURREY, GU21 2EN**

This covering letter accompanies a householder planning application seeking permission for the erection of a first floor to an existing bungalow, to provide a 1.5 storey dwelling, together with the erection of a single storey rear extension following the demolition of the existing conservatory at the above-named residential property.

This letter will demonstrate that the proposal provides well-designed and appropriate extensions to the existing property which would improve the internal layout whilst ensuring the site continues to reflect the general pattern of development within the immediate area. Further, it will set out how the proposal is acceptable in principle and complies with both local and national planning policy.

The Site

The application site is located on the East side of Lower Guildford Road, Knaphill. The locality comprises predominantly detached and semidetached residential properties set within relatively long plots; the area is residential in character. The site is located within the developed area of Woking in a highly sustainable location.

The host dwelling itself is set back slightly from Lower Guildford Road. The site is essentially flat and features close boarded timber fencing around its boundaries. The nearest residential properties are nos. 54 which is located on slightly higher ground to the north, and 52, to the south, which is separated by a small vehicular access that runs between the properties. The property further north, at no. 52 Lower Guildford Road, was also once a bungalow but has previously been granted permission for first floor extension to create a full two storey dwelling, under permission ref. PLAN/2019/0362. That permission was implemented and constructed has since been completed.

The Proposal



The proposal comprises the erection of a first floor extension. It would provide additional bedrooms, ensuite and a family bathroom at first floor level. The single storey rear extension would replace an existing conservatory and would provide modern, open living space for the occupiers.

The proposal would provide a family room to improve the layout of the existing kitchen at ground floor level. There would be a patio area immediately to the rear to provide a seating area.

As detailed on the submitted drawings, the external materials would match those on the host dwelling.

The proposed first floor extension would raise the ridge height by just 1500mm. The eaves would remain low and whilst this does result in low internal ceiling heights to the edge of the first-floor rooms, it ensures that the building retains a relatively low profile. Shown below is the elevation which would be viewed from the adjacent highway. In designing the dwelling to appear as a 1.5 storey dwelling, it would provide a transition in scale between the neighboring full two storey dwelling at no. 58 and the bungalow at no. 54.



It is not proposed to incorporate any windows at first floor level on the side elevations. The proposed rooflights on the side roofslope elevations would serve bathrooms and would be fitted at 1.7m above finished floor level.

The proposed single storey extension would replace the existing conservatory. It would measure just 4m in depth and features a sedum roof.

### Planning Considerations

The site is located within the developed area of Woking, wherein the principle of development is acceptable subject to the impact on visual and residential amenity. The principle of residential development to extend homes and provide enlarged or improved accommodation in this location is acceptable.

### *Design and Impact on the Character of the Area*

In accordance with paragraph 130(c) of the NPPF, design should respond creatively to its site and context and high-quality design should be welcomed. The design approach adopted is consistent with the Framework, which requires proposals to respond to local character and history and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials. It also promotes the effective use of land.

Paragraph 126-132 of the NPPF also set out criteria for good design which include that development should; add to the quality of an area; be visually attractive; and be sympathetic to local character and history whilst not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change.

Policies CS21 and CS34 require that development be well integrated with the surrounding area. The proposal accords in so far as it relates; it contributes to a positive sense of place and local distinctiveness through the adaptation and enhancement of a dwelling, maintaining the local vernacular in an existing residential location on a generous plot with room to accommodate a slightly large building. It demonstrates positive policy support in this regard. It will utilise sustainable, modern materials for the build, ensuring that the carbon footprint of the dwelling is kept to a minimum and complies with all relevant regulations.

This proposal does optimise the site on which it stands, contributing to a well-designed, versatile and sustainable home for the future. It has been designed with due regard to the neighbouring dwellings and setting of the site in terms of design and scale. The proposal would utilise sustainable, attractive materials, appropriate to the surroundings. As such, the proposal is in-keeping with the residential setting. The plot size is quite generous, and it does not represent overdevelopment and can therefore be said to respect the typical density. It contributes to a range of dwelling sizes and maintains ample garden land. Overall, the proposal will enhance the attractiveness of the streetscape, protecting the sense of place.

The Woking Design SPD (2015) states that *"two storey side extensions which leave little, or no space, between adjoining dwellings will not be permitted if they create a terracing effect"* and *"to prevent this type of effect altering the character of the street it is important to retain visual separation between properties. A minimum of one metre gap should be retained between all two storey extensions and a side boundary"*. Although the proposal would not be extending the property to the side, it does comply with the purpose behind this guidance. It would not extend the property towards the site boundaries, therefore, ensuring that at least a 1m gap would be retained either side (in fact the separation distance would exceed this). As such, it is therefore considered that the proposed extensions would be acceptable in this regards.

When officers considered the proposed extensions at no. 52 Lower Guildford Road (permission ref. PLAN/2019/0362- Proposed Elevations Shown below), which proposed extensions to create a full two storey dwelling, it was noted that the front gable projection would be retained and replicated at first floor *'thus maintaining the character of the host dwellinghouse'*. No. 52 is shown in the photograph below. The current proposal also seeks to retain the front gable feature and would thus maintain the character of the host dwelling.



Furthermore, officers also noted that *'The dwelling to the north of the application site is a two storey house and it is considered that the proposal would be in keeping with the character of the host dwelling and the street scene.'* Officers, therefore, considered that it would have an acceptable impact on the character and appearance of the area.



*Nos. 52 and 54 Lower Guildford Road*

In light of the above, it must be the case that the current proposal, which would result in a relatively modest 1.5 storey dwelling, would be appropriate in terms of its impact on the visual amenity of the area. The proposals would not be prominent within the street scene, in fact that proposed rear extension would not be visible from outside of the site, with the exception of the immediate neighbouring properties.

The materials used would match those of the existing dwelling and the roof design would be sympathetic to the host dwelling, utilising a pitched roof. The fenestration detailing would remain consistent across the property and would be appropriate for a dwelling of this nature. The design of

the extensions would not detract from the character of either the existing property or the surrounding area.

The proposals are therefore in accordance with the Woking Design SPD, Policies CS21 and CS34 and the relevant paragraphs of the NPPF 2023.

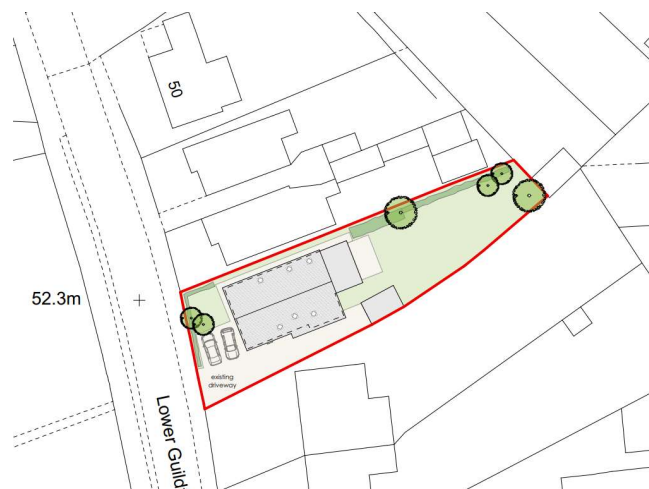
#### *Impact on Neighbouring Residential Amenity*

Policy CS21 requires new development to Achieve a satisfactory relationship to adjoining properties avoiding significant harmful impact in terms of loss of privacy, daylight or sunlight, or an overbearing effect due to bulk, proximity or outlook.

The nearest neighbouring residential properties are at nos. 54 and 58 Lower Guildford Road. No. 58 is separated from the dwelling at the application site by a vehicular access that runs to the garage. The flank elevation of no. 58 is set away from the boundary with the application site. In any case, due to the scale of the proposed extensions and the fact that there are no windows at first floor level which would provide outlook, there would be no material harm caused by way of an overbearing impact, loss of light or overlooking to no. 58.

No. 54 is an existing bungalow that has been extended considerably over the years. It has a large single storey rear extension and several linked outbuildings to the rear. It is sited on slightly higher ground levels than the application site.

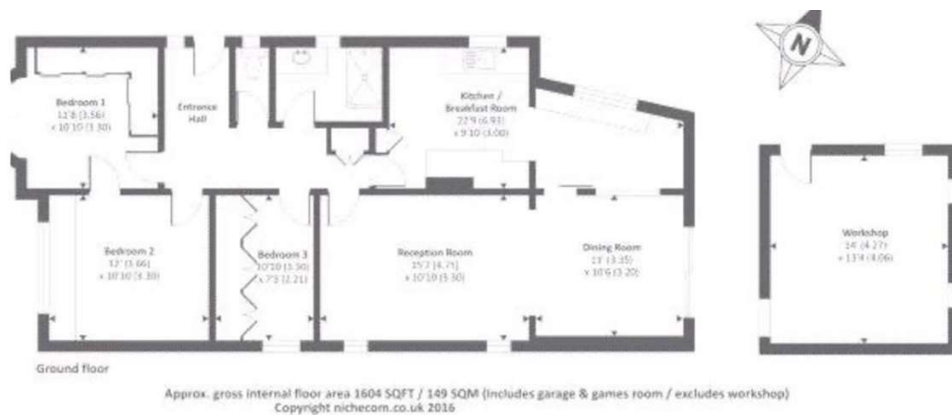
The proposed single storey rear extension would replace an existing conservatory. Woking Council's SPD *Outlook, Amenity, Privacy and Daylight* (2008) contains a 45° test to determine whether a rear extension would have an acceptable impact on the sunlight/daylight levels received by the rear windows of adjoining and adjacent properties, in this instance no. 54 Lower Guildford Road. The proposed extension would not increase the built footprint of the building beyond the existing rear elevation of no. 54. Furthermore, it would measure just 4m in depth. Due to the siting and orientation of the ground floor windows at no. 54, the proposal would comply with the 45-degree rule in regard to the ground floor windows. The relationship is shown on the Block Plan below. As such, the proposal would pass this test.



The SPD also contains a 25° test to determine whether an extension would have an acceptable impact on the sunlight/daylight levels received by the side windows of adjoining and adjacent properties.

The proposal would increase the height of the roof by just 1500mm at the ridge, but the separation distances to the shared boundaries, the change in levels, and the proposed low level eaves, all mitigate any impact in respect of the windows on the side elevation of no.54 Lower Guildford Road. Furthermore, it is important to note that records show that these windows are secondary to a reception room, with the primary window serving that room being a large set of bi-folding/ french doors on the rear elevation. The other window serves a small bedroom, which according to the most recent plans (shown below), is used as a walk-in dressing room and storage. Therefore, given the design, scale, massing, the change in land levels and separation distances, the proposed first floor extension is accordingly considered to have an acceptable impact in this regard.

These matters were considered as part of the application at no. 52 Lower Guildford Road (permission ref. PLAN/2019/0362), which proposed extensions to create a full two storey dwelling. The Officer Report accepted that even though the proposal in that instance failed the 25° test, the windows would have been secondary windows and thus, the relationship would be acceptable. The same must be said in this instance, especially given the proposal would not create a full two storey dwelling, instead it would provide a modest increase in height to result in a 1.5 storey dwelling.



Internal Layout at No. 54

Therefore, there would be no material impact in terms of loss of light and overshadowing to these neighbouring properties.

There are no side facing windows proposed within the development and so there are no overlooking concerns resulting from the development.

The development would result in the formation of additional bedrooms. Woking Borough Council's SPD *Parking Standards* (2018) recommends that dwelling houses with four or more bedrooms should have at least three car parking spaces. There is adequate parking provision at the front of the property and in the existing garage to comply with the maximum parking provisions as set out the standards when considering the increased number of bedrooms. Therefore, there are no concerns with regard to parking provision as a result of this development.

The application site is in an area with a medium risk of surface water flooding. The application would be at first floor level only and would only increase the footprint of the host dwellinghouse with a modest single storey rear extension. This replaces an existing conservatory. For these reasons it is clear that the proposal would have an acceptable impact on the flood risk of the area.

In summary, it is clear that the proposal would have an acceptable impact on character, neighbouring amenity, private amenity space, flood risk and car parking provision and highway safety. The proposal therefore accords with policies CS9 and CS21 of the *Woking Core Strategy* (2012), Supplementary Planning Documents *Woking Design* (2015), *Outlook, Amenity, Privacy and Daylight* (2008), *Parking Standards* (2018) and the *National Planning Policy Framework* (2023).

Should there be any questions then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

MMK STUDIO

