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Design & Access Statement

relating to the extension & refurbishment of

Mere Green

Glen Avenue

Abbots Leigh

North Somerset

BS8 3SD

Project No.: **2310**

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1.0 - Introduction

This planning statement should be read in conjunction with the submitted drawings.

This householder planning application seeks consent to extend & refurbish the existing two-storey four-bedroom detached dwelling at Mere Green, Glen Avenue, Abbots Leigh, North Somerset, BS8 3SD.

The proposals will provide the house with a spacious new kitchen-dining that opens out onto the garden, an extra reception room, an additional bedroom & the existing children's bedrooms will be enlarged. The comprehensive refurbishment of the property will greatly improve the thermal efficiency of the house, reduce overheating & the proposed array of photovoltaic panels will allow the house to generate its own electricity & make it easier to switch the central heating to a non-fossil fuel based system in the future & charge electric vehicles.

2.0 - Existing Property & Context

Mere Green is situated at the junction between Sandy Lane & Glen Avenue in Abbots Leigh. The property is located outside the settlement boundary & on Green Belt land. Mere Green is the first house on the right hand side when you enter Glen Avenue.

The existing 'dormer bungalow' house was constructed in the late 1940's. The property has been extended several times since its original construction (see Planning Background for details). There



Mere Green viewed from the front garden

is a single storey garage with a flat roof to one side of the house & a modern white UPVC framed conservatory to the other side. At first floor level, 3 small bedrooms have been formed within the original roof space & by extending with dormers to the front & to the rear.

The house is predominantly finished in textured cream-painted sand cement render with some small areas of red brick. It features white UPVC windows & red-brown pantile roof tiles.

3.0 - Planning Background

3.1 - Mere Green's Planning History

There are a handful of historical planning applications on the North Somerset Planning Website relating to Mere Green:

- 1335/85 - Proposed extension and improvements - Approve without Conditions (Decision Issued on Thu 18 Jul 1985)
- 96/0300 - Proposed kitchen extension - Approve with Conditions (Decision Issued on Fri 22 Mar 1996)
- 04/P/1195/F - Erection of a single storey rear extension - Approve with Conditions (Decision Issued on Mon 28 Jun 2004)
- 07/P/0453/F - Erection of a side conservatory - Approve with Conditions (Decision Issued on Mon 16 Apr 2007)

3.2 - Relevant Planning History of Neighbouring Properties

Several properties on Glen Avenue & on nearby Knightcott Road have been granted planning permission for works that are similar to, if not more extensive than, those that we are proposing under this application. See below a small selection of relevant applications to neighbouring properties:

The Quest, Glen Avenue

Earlier this year, The Quest, the house directly opposite Mere Green obtained planning permission (Ref: 22/P/2584/FUH) for an extensive refurbishment & extension project that featured a 56% increase in floor area. The vast majority of the extra square metres are at first floor level.

Pentire, Glen Avenue

Back in 2010, Pentire, the house immediately adjacent to Mere Green & which when first built was probably identical to the application property, obtained planning permission (Ref: 10/P/0122/F) for extensions & alterations to the roof. This proposal bears some similarities with the works that we are now proposing at Mere Green.

The Dene, Glen Avenue

Approximately two years ago, The Dene which is located a little further along Glen Avenue obtained planning permission (Ref: 21/P/2522/FUH) for a large two-storey circa 72m² side extension.



The extension & roof alteration works to Pentire that were approved in 2010.

Woodycombe, Glen Avenue

Back in 2014, Woodycombe further down Glen Avenue obtained planning permission (Ref: 14/P/2631/F) for a replacement dwelling that was substantially larger than the original house.

1 Knightcott Road

In 2017, the owners of 1 Knightcott Road which is situated directly behind Mere Green obtained planning permission (Ref: 16/P/3047/F) for the extension & refurbishment of the existing house. The proposal increased the area of the property by 59%.

4.0 - Relevant Planning Policies

Policy DM12 of the North Somerset Sites & Policies Plan Part 1: Development Management Policies (adopted July 2016) is particularly relevant to our proposal. DM12 relates to development within the Green Belt & it states: *“The extension or alteration of a building will not be regarded as inappropriate provided that it is within the existing curtilage and it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. For North Somerset ‘original’ relates to the building as existing on 26 July 1985 or for buildings constructed after this date as so built. The determining factors in assessing whether the extension is disproportionate will be the size of the proposed extension in relation to the size of the original building. An extension will not normally be regarded as disproportionate provided it does not exceed 50% of the gross floor area of the original building.”*

5.0 - Application Proposals

5.1 - Proposals

The alterations to the house proposed by this application can broadly be split into 3: firstly within the main central part of the house we propose a series of roof extensions at first floor level in order to enlarge & improve the bedroom accommodation; secondly on the north-west end of the house we plan to reduce the size of the garage at ground floor level & create a new bedroom by extending over the altered garage; & finally on the south-east end of the house we plan to remove the ugly UPVC conservatory & build a new single storey kitchen-dining room extension that opens up to the garden.

At present the 3 bedrooms at first floor level within the house are not particularly spacious & they have restricted head heights due to the slope of the roof. It should also be noted that the existing poor construction of the upper floor results in a temperature range of 11 to 36 degrees across the year with 35-83% humidity which results in mould growth in the children's bedrooms. This proposal looks to create two new gable-ended dormers on the front plane of the main roof, as well as a large box dormer with a flat roof on the rear side of the main roof. These new dormers will allow the creation of four good-sized very well insulated rooms at first floor level (3 double bedrooms + 1 new reception room), as well as a new family bathroom, an en-suite to the new master bedroom & a dressing room. The flat roof of the large dormer to the rear will accommodate an array of photovoltaic panels (flat roof has been positioned so that the PV panels will not be higher than the ridge of the roof) & 3 flat roof windows that will provide natural light to the bathroom, en-suite & stairwell.

On the north-west end of the house, we plan to part-demolish the existing garage & erect a new flank wall that is 0.5m further away from the boundary with Pentire, so that a path running up this side of the house can be created. Over the reconfigured garage, we plan to create 1 additional bedroom within the new pitched roof. By bringing the flank wall of the garage away from the boundary & creating this new bedroom within the roofspace of the new roof over the garage (rather than a conventional two-storey extension), we believe that this proposal will have little impact on the owners of Pentire.

On the opposite side of the house, we plan to remove the unattractive & impractical UPVC framed conservatory & create a lovely new open-plan kitchen-dining room extension that will open out onto the garden. In contrast to the conservatory, this new extension will be able to be used all year round. The kitchen-dining room extension will be located almost exactly where the conservatory is positioned, however we plan to square the rear corner of the building in order to create a pleasant rectangular shaped room.

In addition to these main proposals there are also a small series of minor alterations:

- We plan to extend the main roof of the house over the existing bay windows to the front of the house at ground floor level, in order to provide solar shading & reduce overheating.
- The existing utility room & bathroom area at ground floor will be reorganised in order to create a larger utility as well as a more compact shower room.
- A small awning is proposed over the utility room door to the rear of the house. This replaces an existing small awning.
- New sliding patio doors are proposed to the existing ground floor bedroom.

- A new smaller garage door will be installed.
- All the existing windows will be replaced with new & the existing rendered walls will be externally insulated & re-rendered in a colour to match the existing.
- A new corridor connecting the garage to the house will be created internally at ground floor level.
- The existing raised timber deck to the front of the house is to be removed & replaced with a new patio at the same level. A large rainwater harvesting tank will be buried below the new patio, which will reduce the amount of surface/storm water going to the existing soakaway & it will reduce the amount of tap water the owners use.
- A series of Velux roof windows are proposed to the various pitched roofs.

5.2 - Materials



3D view of the proposed house from the front garden

Broadly speaking the proposed extensions to the house will be finished in materials that mirror the existing appearance of the house. The new extension walls will be finished in off-white render & where the existing external walls are externally insulated, the insulation will be coated in new off-white render.

We propose to finish all the pitched roofs with a new clay plain roof tile. This same tile will be used to clad the walls of the dormer to the rear of the roof, so that this appears to blend in with the existing roof as much as possible.

The gable-ended dormer walls to the front of the house will be clad with off-white horizontal fibre-cement cladding boards selected to match the colour of the render to the masonry walls.

See the Proposed Elevation drawings for further details.

5.3 - Area Calculation & Policy DM12

Footprint of House

We plan to reduce the footprint of the garage by 3.5m² & enlarge the footprint of the house by squaring off the corner of the kitchen dining room which results in an increase of 7.6m². In total the proposals will only increase the footprint of the house by 4.1m².

The site area is 1,226.6m².

Floor Area Calculation

The existing house has an internal area of 242.7m² (yellow + red in floor plans below).



Existing Areas (Ground Floor & First Floor)

The proposal will increase the internal area to 289.0m² (green in floor plans below).



Proposed Areas (Ground Floor & First Floor)

This application therefore proposes an increase in internal floor area of 19%.

Policy DM12

Policy DM12 says that when calculating the percentage increase the 'original' relates to the building as existing on 26 July 1985 (including any permissions granted within a 5 year period before this date). In order to calculate the percentage increase according to DM12, we must therefore subtract the area highlighted in red on the above existing plans because these parts of the house were added after 1985.

When the red areas are removed, the 'original' size of the house is 187.0m² & therefore the percentage increase from 187.0m² to 289.0m² is 54%.

We accept that this percentage is slightly greater than the 50% figure that is referred to within policy DM12, however we hope that North Somerset will agree that what is being proposed is not disproportionate to the existing building. The proposed extensions are designed to appear subservient to the original main part of the house, we do not plan to increase the overall height of the building & as I've explained above the proposals have a negligible effect on the footprint of the house & the amount of garden. Particularly when seen in the context of the numerous other houses that surround Mere Green having recently been granted planning permission to make similar if not larger enlargements, we hope that North Somerset will find these proposals acceptable.


6.0 - Conclusion

We hope that the council will agree that the proposed refurbishment & extension of Mere Green is not disproportionate to the scale of the existing property & that the design & choice of materials will create an attractive house that respects the style & appearance of the original building.

The comprehensive refurbishment of the property will greatly improve the thermal efficiency of the house, it will reduce overheating & the proposed array of photovoltaic panels will allow the house to generate its own electricity & make it easier to switch the central heating to a non-fossil fuel based system in the future & charge electric vehicles.

The improvements to the bedroom accommodation & the new good-sized kitchen-dining space with its wonderful connection to the garden that are created by these proposals will enable the owners & their growing family to enjoy living in the property for many years to come.

We hope that the council will find these proposals acceptable.



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