

MAYFLOWER, NEW ROAD HURLEY.

PLANNING, DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT INCORPORATING HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

THE SITE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

The site lies within the defined settlement boundary of Hurley and in a built-up residential area with mixed architectural styles. The building sits along New Road, a private quiet street of modern detached houses located behind Hurley Village High Street. All of the properties in this vicinity are substantial in size and sit within large plots, set back from the road and are detached in nature.

The site itself consists of the single dwelling on a sizeable plot within a large curtilage. It is also located within the Hurley Village Conservation Area. The property is not listed and there are no listed heritage assets in close proximity that would be impacted by the proposals.

The site lies within the Green Belt and Flood Zone 2.

The existing house is believed to date from the early part of the 20th century and originally consisted of a house and garage. The original garage was replaced by a two storey side extension to the property's west elevation with a new detached double garage was consented and built nearer to the entrance to the frontage access and driveway / parking area. Both these elements were completed in the 1990's.

The house comprises face brick and tile hung elevations under a clay tiled roof. It features low eaves with a variety of gables and gabled dormers at first floor.

The site boundaries are lined with established hedges and tree planting with a sizeable rear garden mainly laid to lawn and a front garden providing for off road parking and turning.

THE PROPOSAL:

The proposal is minor and domestic in nature and includes the provision of;

- A new porch addition to the south east elevation to create a new entrance to the 'boot room'
- An addition to, and reconfiguration of the existing hall to create an improved hallway and new toilet.
- Internal reconfigurations to improve the 'flow' of the house and its flexibility of use.
- The provision of new windows and door openings to better complement the design of the house, and its internal reconfiguration and to allow increase natural light into the principle habitable rooms.

As the property is not statutorily or locally listed these are not notifiable works in heritage asset terms.

PLANNING POLICY

The relevant planning policies to be considered in assessing the proposals include the National Planning Policy Framework and related Guidance, and the following policies of the Local Development Plan.

Quality of Place

QP4 River Thames Corridor

QP5 Development in Rural Areas and the Green Belt

Site Info: Hurley

QP5 Development in Rural Areas and the Green Belt

Historic Environment

HE1 Historic Environment

Also of relevance are;

The Hurley Conservation Area Appraisal

The Windsor & Maidenhead Boroughwide Design Guide.

The Hurley and The Walthams Neighbourhood Plan

The following sections address those matters to be covered within a Design and Access statement as recommended by CABE.

Thereafter is an assessment of the proposal (planning balance) that addresses the relationship of the proposals with extant planning policy and guidance.

USE

The use remains a single family dwelling house.

The property's current owners and applicants wish to remain in their home and are committed to the upgrading of the existing accommodation in its existing 'optimum viable use' as a single-family residence in order to give the property a secure and sustainable long-term future.

The property is now in need of updating, modernisation and related investment to achieve this.

It is the applicant's intention to occupy the property as their family's principal residence and the proposed works as outlined below reflect the need to address the identifiable issues that are present along with other shortcomings in the way the building presently performs.

The proposals as outlined above, seek to embrace the opportunity to add sympathetic features and additions which can offer very modest additional accommodation now required in a manner that will nonetheless preserve and enhance the character of the property and its important setting, whilst also improving its energy performance and bringing it more in to line with modern day living expectations for such a home.

These works will create a fully restored and much improved residence, fully respectful of its own history and place within the settlement and which offers tangible improvements to the buildings original design, architecture, and materials.

Accordingly, the buildings visual appearance and resultant setting will continue to make a valuable contribution to the character of the Conservation Area in which it sits.

The proposals have been developed following a detailed assessment of local character and design of the property and nearby built form, and have had regard to the prevailing planning policy context for the proposal and an analysis of other relevant planning heritage, environmental and sustainability considerations.

DESIGN & APPEARANCE

The proposed new build works seek to blend seamlessly with the existing building using matching materials and architectural detailing.

Roof forms and pitches are complementary to the existing dwelling and the footprint is only very modestly increased. (see 'amount' below)

The new porches include matching bricks and tile hanging.

The opportunity has also been taken to improve and upgrade the property's fenestration with the insertion of new windows and doors designed to reflect the existing proportions of the elevational features in which they sit whilst also affording increased light to the main habitable rooms.

The new fenestration will also offer energy savings through an increase in performance over the existing items.

ACCESS

Access to the site remains as existing, as does the provision for on site car parking and turning.

Internal alterations to room configuration allows for improved accessibility and circulation within the house.

The repositioning of the entrance within the south east elevation also represents an improvement over the usability of this means of access to the house interior and allows for a new cloakroom / boot room to be incorporated.

AMOUNT

In floor area terms the alterations proposed add c.1.4sqm (Porch to south east elevation) and c.5.6sqm for the extension to the existing hall / lobby.

This equates to a c.2% increase in area only over the existing building.

The works do not increase existing eaves or ridge heights.

LAYOUT

Internally the reconfiguration of rooms and entrances allows for a more convenient and flexible circulation and pattern of use within the house that is more suited to modern day living standards and related expectations for such a home.

Externally there is no significant change to the layout of the site.

SCALE

Only modest ground floor additions are proposed. These represent a reconfiguration of the property's entrances and utility spaces within the ground floor.

The scale of the new roofs seek to respect and reflect the roof profiles of the existing home.

This sets eaves levels to match existing with ridge heights of the new additions well below the property's main roof ridge.

There are no additions at first floor level.

LANDSCAPING

No landscape features or trees are impacted by the proposed additions or alterations.

PLANNING ASSESSMENT / PLANNING BALANCE

In developing the subject proposals regard has been had to the design guidance referenced above and every attempt has been made to ensure the addition will complement the design, architecture, detailing, and materials of the host building to ensure the maintenance of a coordinated, attractive, and enhanced external visual appearance.

The relevant planning considerations that have been addressed and met by the subject proposals are set out below.

The Government's overarching planning policy framework (NPPF) provides a presumption in favour of sustainable development. It makes it clear that for decision taking (on applications for planning permission) this means:

- *approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay;*
- *where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, granting permission unless:*
 - i. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole; or*
 - ii. specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted.*

The presumption is therefore that planning permission should be granted unless there are good reasons in an up-to-date plan to resist such.

Of key importance here also is guidance at Paragraph 130 which states 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 (such as increased densities);*
- 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;*

The proposal has been developed to ensure that the works are not in conflict with any of these overarching national planning policy objectives but rather address the need to provide the home with a future that meets the needs of the occupiers in a way which is commensurate with its plot size, functions well, and which is sympathetic to its village setting and enhances the character of the host building itself.

This is also achieved without impacting upon the reasonable residential amenity enjoyed by neighbouring occupiers.

The key issues for consideration in this connection are:

- Design and appearance;
- Impact on neighbouring amenities;
- Green Belt; and,
- Heritage Impact & impact upon trees / landscape.

Design & Appearance

The appearance of a development is a material planning consideration and the National Planning Policy Framework, Section 12 (Achieving Well-Designed Places) and Borough Local Plan Policies QP1 and QP3, advise that all development should seek to achieve a high quality of design that improves the character and quality of an area.

As outlined above, in terms of appearance the proposal would respect the appearance and design of the host building, its architecture and materials and as such the appearance and character of the building itself or wider street scene would not be harmed.

It is worthy of note also here that views from the public realm towards the proposed new works are limited to glimpses only by well established and substantial boundary planting along the frontage to the house on New Road which itself is a no through road.

Accordingly views of the proposed structure will be mainly limited to those from within the host dwellings curtilage.

Amenities;

As single storey minor extensions to the existing building, which have no near residential neighbours, the proposal would have no impact on the reasonable residential amenities over and above that of the existing situation.

Accordingly, there would be no harm caused to the immediate neighbouring properties in terms of loss of privacy, outlook, daylight, sunlight or otherwise.

Green Belt

Whether or not the proposal is appropriate development.

The application site is located within the Green Belt area of Hurley. Section 13 of the NPPF, which concerns Protecting Green Belt land, identifies: "*The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.*"

Paragraph 149 of the NPPF further advises the construction of new buildings should be regarded as inappropriate development in the Green Belt, subject to a limited number of exceptions.

The extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building is one of the specified exceptions set out in paragraph 149 of the NPPF.

Minor extensions such as the proposal that are not disproportionate in size can therefore be accepted for the purposes of defining appropriateness.

Accordingly, the proposal can be considered to be 'not inappropriate development'.

Impact on openness and purposes of Green Belt Policy is similarly referenced at Policy QP5 of the Borough Local Plan which states that development in the Green Belt will be restricted as set out in national policy. In this regard, paragraph 149 (c) of the NPPF provides for residential extensions within the Green Belt that do not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original dwelling.

Mayflower is a substantial residence in a generous plot in the heart of the village. The proposed additional covered area is limited in scale, mass and bulk such that their effect in the openness of the Green Belt and their impact on the purposes of including land within it is not significant.

In light of the spacious character of the application site and the scale and composition of the additions, it is considered that the proposals would represent a proportionate addition to the property as a whole that would preserve the open and undeveloped character of the Green Belt and as such is compliant with Green belt restraint policies at the national and local level.

Heritage Matters /Heritage Impact Assessment:

Conservation Area and Listed Building Impact

The application site is located within the Hurley Conservation Area. The building is not statutorily or locally listed and nor are there any such listed buildings within close proximity. The building is not within an area where there is known below ground archaeology.

In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.

Although Hurley is a village with a rich and ancient history, this part of New Road itself is not of great age and does not contain historic properties or features worthy of local or statutory listing.

In this connection the status of the significance of the heritage asset affected here can be said to be at the lower end of the spectrum

That said Hurley Conservation Area was so designated to provide a commitment to preserve and to enhance the special character or appearance of an area. These areas are protected by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and earlier legislation.

The protection regime and related appraisal recognises that the special character of these areas does not come from the quality of their buildings alone. The historic layout of roads, paths and boundaries; characteristic building and paving materials; a particular 'mix' of building uses; public and private spaces, such as gardens, parks and greens; trees and street furniture, which contribute to particular views - all these and more are important.

Conservation areas give broader protection than the listing of individual buildings: all the features, listed or otherwise, within the area, are recognised as part of its character.

Given the scale and complementary character, design and materials of the proposed additions and changes, in combination with the discreet location of the additions adjoining the host dwelling, the proposals would harmonize with the host building in terms of scale, style and use of materials.

Overall, the impact of the development is minor in nature and causes no adverse harm to the material 'value of the place' or its significance in heritage protection terms.

Accordingly, it is considered that the proposal would conserve the established character and appearance of the Hurley Conservation Area.

It is accepted practice that there is less emphasis on preventing development in Conservation Areas than on ensuring that development is appropriate to the local character and that opportunities are taken to conserve the appearance of the area.

The proposal is considered to be in compliance of the requirements as set out within Chapter 16. Of the NPPF2023 "Conserving and enhancing the historic environment" in understanding the significance of affected heritage assets and to demonstrate the need to sustain and enhance this significance. (Para 196 of NPPF 2023 refers.)

Historic England 'set the scene' for considering proposals to develop new build projects within Conservation Areas generally.

In this connection, it should be recognized that Historic England in their own planning advice and guidance document entitled "Valuing Places: Good Practice In Conservation Areas" state that;

"Conservation areas are in the vanguard of heritage protection. Designated by local authorities, they reflect the value placed by communities on cherished neighbourhoods, villages and town centres, giving them a key role in the regeneration of local areas."

This recognition of local distinctiveness is enshrined in legislation. It is not a device for preventing change or new development.

Every conservation area contains places which have changed. Often these changes are features of the character which we wish to protect; often, too, further changes have to be accommodated if we are to ensure such places have a viable and beneficial future.

Well-managed change can bring with it the investment and care necessary to keep places in good condition."

This advice confirms that there will always remain opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas where the qualities and significance of the characteristics of the area are appreciated and understood and where the development proposed can be shown to not materially harm the significance of any affected features that combine to give the area its inherent character.

Parking and Highways

The proposals would not increase the demand for car parking within the application site and would not reduce the existing level of off-road parking provisions.

No changes are proposed to the vehicular access. The proposals would not therefore have any parking or highway implications.

Flood

The proposal is located within Flood Zone2. As such, in view of the scale and nature of the additions the 'Standing Advice' of the Environment Agency in respect of householder development has been followed.

Sustainability & Energy

In general, all new materials will be selected for their appropriateness and sustainability and where possible will be sourced locally and achieve high ratings outlined in the Green Guide.

All elements of the new building will achieve equal to or higher than the notional U values of the Building Regulations, insulation upgrades to the existing building to be included, new efficient boiler and heating system to be fitted.

All new windows to be double glazed.

All new light fittings to be low energy.

All new sanitary ware, washing machines & dishwashers will be water efficient, rainwater harvesting will be encouraged and installed where appropriate.

Conclusion

It is contended that the impact of the proposals is proportionate and sympathetic to the dwellinghouse, it's neighbours, the green belt, Conservation Area and the wider environment.

The proposal is not considered to result in a development that would appear significantly harmful to the host property or to the local character of the area.

The proposal is not considered to be disproportionate to the size of the original house so the proposal is considered appropriate development in the Green Belt and accords with guidance in the NPPF, which allows the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.

The proposed additions are to be constructed from matching materials in keeping with the existing property. These materials are also in keeping with the traditional designs as set out in the authority's design guidance and by remaining consistent with this identifiable vernacular.

Accordingly, the proposed extension is not considered to have a harmful impact on the existing dwelling or the general character of the area.

The light levels and privacy enjoyed by neighbours would not be affected.

The resultant build form would not appear overbearing in appearance to either the neighbours, or the wider environment but would appear consistent and commensurate in relation to the property's own extensive curtilage.

The site is more than capable of accommodating the required number of car parking spaces and the existing access and landscaped boundaries which obscure public realm view to the application site would not be affected.

Given the above, the planning balance assessment therefore concludes that the proposed addition would not cause harm to the character of the area and would not cause harm to surrounding residential amenities and is therefore in accordance with all relevant extant national and Local Development Plan policies and related supplementary guidance.

In the light of this it is contended that those practical improvements presented by the new building and resultant lack of significant harm caused is sufficient to allow for the development to proceed.

It is hoped therefore that the local planning authority will feel able to support the proposals as submitted.