

## **Planning Justification Statement**

### **Proposal for Retention of Enlarged Domestic Outbuilding to be used in part as Ancillary Habitable Accommodation at 16, Westley Road, Langdon Hills, Basildon, Essex, SS16 5PA**

#### **1.0 The Site and Local Context**

**1.1** The site is in a well-connected urban location. It is within the urban area boundary of Basildon wherein the proposed development is acceptable in principle. The site and wider locality is not subject to any restrictive/protective designations either under national statute or Local Plan policy.

**1.2** The property comprises a detached house standing on a good sized plot with the rear garden being out of obvious public view and adjoin other residential gardens, all within a wider setting that is essentially residential in nature and character.



#### **2.0 The Proposal**

**2.1** An existing lawful single-storey outbuilding in use for domestic storage and

home office has been extended, without planning permission, by the addition of a frontal projection that has enlarged the roof-space area (already in use for domestic storage and accessed via an external staircase). The entire first-floor space would be used in an ancillary capacity as a habitable annexe to the main house. The outbuilding as enlarged is shown in the photographs below.



### **3.0 Relevant Planning Policy**

#### **National Level: The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021**

**3.1** At paragraph 7 of the NPPF it states that: ***“The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.”*** It goes on at paragraph 10 to state that there should be a ***“... presumption in favour of sustainable development.”*** It then states at paragraph 38 it that: ***“Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.”***

**3.2** The NPPF does not directly address matters of residential design or residential amenity but at section 12 it does set out some general, common-sense principles providing basic direction to achieving good design outcomes.

**3.3** With regard to parking, the NPPF does not dictate minimum or maximum parking standards. It takes a more flexible and responsive approach in effectively directing at paragraph 107 that if provision be required at all, it be determined on a site-by-site basis taking into account a range of factors that will vary according to any given situation.

### **Local Level: The Basildon District Local Plan 1998 (BDLP) Saved Policies 2007**

**3.4** The BDLP is currently the adopted Local Plan. There is one policy from it which is of relevance to the proposed development and this is summarised below. Policy BAS BE12: ‘*Development Control*’-This sets out five general planning criteria designed to prevent harm to various interests of acknowledged importance. It incorporates requirements to consider the impact of development on the standard, established aspects of visual amenity and residential amenity. The key qualification within the policy is that a development proposal will be refused only “*if it causes material harm*”. It does not itself prescribe tests by which harm can be precisely measured and identified.

**3.5** Application of the BDLP is supported where appropriate by Supplementary Planning Guidance document ‘*Parking Standards—Design and Good Practice*’ dating from 2009.

### **4.0 Assessment of Planning Merits**

**4.1** The design philosophy which underlies the development is that of improving the functional quality of the property as a family living environment, creating an inherently attractive and architecturally sound outbuilding whilst at the same time avoiding harm to the character and appearance of the wider locality or to adjoining property occupiers. The development has been positively conceived in all aspects to accord with the various protection and other functional expectations of national guidance and local policies and adopted parking standards referred to in part three of this statement.

**4.2** The enlarged outbuilding has the scale, form and appearance of a typical domestic structure. It is constructed of attractive external materials and is architecturally and aesthetically compatible with the main house and wider built-environment context.

**4.3** The use of the enlarged domestic outbuilding in the manner proposed would, self-evidently, be entirely in conformity with, and appropriate to, the residential

use of the site and wider residential context. A grant of planning permission would usually be subject to imposition of a standard condition that the proposed annexe be used only as ancillary habitable accommodation to the host house.

**4.4** With regard to effect on neighbour residential amenity, there would be no conflict with relevant adopted policy in this respect. The enlargement that has taken place has not been in the combination of size and siting relative to primary habitable room windows and principal outdoor sitting areas at neighbouring and nearby properties—nor involve windows positioned to cause overlooking (the only window in the frontal extension, whilst obliquely facing towards the rear elevation of no.14, Westley Road, is at a distance of approximately 34 metres from that house, with an intervening screen fence between the two properties) —such as to be capable of having effects of materially diminishing the immediate outlook, ambient level of natural light or privacy enjoyed by their occupants.

**4.5** It should also be pointed out that the vehicular driveway serving the outbuilding is already in existence and used in that manner, i.e. as a means of bringing vehicles down to the outbuilding (see aerial view of site at paragraph 1.2 above). Any use of the driveway directly connected to use of the outbuilding as a habitable annexe would only occur under the umbrella of being part and parcel of the existing residential use of the site as a single private dwelling-house. It would represent no more change and have no more effect in relation to residential amenity at neighbouring properties than if the house itself were to be enlarged to accommodate more occupants.

**4.6** The proposed use of the outbuilding for domestic purposes associated with the residential use and enjoyment of the main house would by definition be acceptable in planning terms. In summation, there would be no conflict with relevant adopted policy in regard to any aspect of respecting and protecting residential amenity.

**4.7** Ample private amenity space would remain to serve the house and the

proposed annexe in a manner consistent with the expectations of adopted policy. Existing off-street parking provision would be unaffected and would serve the house and annexe to the level expected by adopted standards. Space for on-site storage of wheelie bins and recycling receptacles would be unaffected and would continue to be provided in a manner compliant with relevant policies. There is nothing relating to any of these matters which would prevent the granting of planning permission.

**4.8** No trees or other landscaping features of vital public visual amenity value have or would be directly or indirectly harmed or lost as a consequence of the development and annexe use. There are no species of protected flora and fauna known or suspected to exist on the site. No part of the site constitutes valuable wildlife habitat.

## **5.0 Conclusion**

**5.1** The development and use can be seen to comply with the spirit, purpose and objectives of the NPPF and all directly relevant Local Plan policies and SPD and no interests of acknowledged importance would be harmed by it, which indicates that a grant of planning permission would be appropriate. The Council is at liberty to impose any conditions it deems reasonable and necessary to ensure satisfactory initial development and satisfactory on-going use of the site.