

Design and Access Statement

34 Alma Road - Windsor - SL4 3HJ



Project address:	34 Alma Road - Windsor - SL4 3HJ
Project number:	991206
Date:	04/03/2024

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1. INTRODUCTION

This Design and Access Statement is in support of the proposed works to the 34 Alam Road, Windsor, SL4 3HJ and is to be read in conjunction with the proposed drawings.

The proposal is a minor amendment to the approved planning application (21/03602/FULL) that represents a thoughtful initiative aimed at enhancing both the living space within the residence and the overall character of the neighbourhood.

There is a deliberate effort to this proposal to align the building with the architectural aesthetics of neighbouring houses, fostering a sense of harmony and continuity. This change not only contributes to the creation of a more cohesive and visually appealing streetscape but also addresses the specific needs of residents seeking a comfortable family home.

This statement delineates the site, its vicinity, planning history, and specifics of the proposed application. This report elucidates the crucial planning policy considerations, while discussing how the proposal aligns with the planning policy framework.

The proposed application considers the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, September 2023) and the Government's online Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), in conjunction with the approved Local Plan for the Windsor Council.

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

Number 34 is situated in the central area of Windsor, at the intersection of Alma and Clarence Road. Although the property is within the Windsor Trinity Place Clarence Crescent Conservation Area, it does not hold the status of a Listed Building. It, along with its adjacent property, constitutes a pair of semi-detached villas- a prevalent architectural theme along the road. These structures, constructed by Thomas Bedborough, contribute to the 19th-century growth of Windsor and stand prominently along Clarence Road as one approaches the town center.

The location plan included with this statement outlines the site, delineated by a boundary marked with a red edge.

3. LANNING HISTORY

There are planning applications for this site listed as below.

- Planning ref. No. 94/01537/FULL - ALTERATIONS TO EXISTING BOUNDARY WALL TO INCREASE THE HEIGHT TO 1.65 METRES – Approved - 09 Sep 1994

- Planning ref. No. 14/O1924/FULL - Installation of 2 automatic gates to enclose vehicle parking area and 1 replacement pedestrian gate – Refuse - 15 Aug 2014
- Planning ref. No. 15/O1330/FULL - Incorporation of external space into basement area, with the construction of a glass roof over, extension of porch and first floor and new second floor extension over - Application Withdrawn - 14 Jul 2015
- Planning ref. No. 15/O3997/FULL - Incorporation of external space into basement area, with the construction of a glass roof over, extension of porch and first floor and new second floor extension over - Application Permitted - 08 Feb 2016
- Planning ref. No. 16/O1235/FULL - Single storey side bay window following removal of doors and external staircase - Application Permitted - 15 Jun 2016
- Planning ref. No. 21/O3602/FULL – Incorporation of external space into basement area, with the construction of a glass roof over, new improved steps from lower ground to ground level, extension of porch and first floor and new second floor extension over – Application Permitted – 23 Mar 2022

4. APPLICATION PROPOSAL

The existing structure functions as a single-family residence with a basement level. The proposed modification involves expanding the basement to enhance the living area while maintaining a discreet visual profile at street level.

The entrance is accessible through the front porch. The building extends with an additional two stories, comprising bedrooms on the first and second floors. Currently, there is a bathroom on the first floor situated above the porch. The proposal aims to replicate this bathroom arrangement on the second floor above the porch.

The current proposal aims to improve the living space at the basement while minimizing alterations to the main elevation of the building compared to the previous approved planning application (21/O3602/FULL).

The intended extension for the second floor will be constructed directly above the current porch. The plan preserves the original features of the entrance porch and maintains the characteristics of the first-floor bathroom situated above the porch.

5. LOCAL PLAN

The Local Development Plan of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, adopted on 8th February 2022 designates 34 Alma Road as situated within the Trinity Place Clarence Crescent Conservation Area.

In summary, Policy CA2, concerning "Guidelines on Development affecting Conservation Areas," emphasizes that proposals should contribute to the improvement or preservation of the Conservation Area and safeguard existing views within it. The policy underscores the importance of alterations being of high quality and sympathetic in design, with a preference for materials that harmonize with adjacent buildings. Additionally, it encourages the use of traditional materials where feasible.

Policy DG1, states "The Design of New Buildings should be compatible with the established street façade having regard to the scale, height and building lines of adjacent properties. Special attention should be given to the "Roofscape" of Buildings". Also, "Materials which are sympathetic to the traditional building materials of the area should be used". Lastly, "harm should not be caused to the character of the surrounding area through development which is cramped, or which results in the loss of important features which contribute to that character".

6. DESIGN PHILOSOPHY

The proposed design for the extension of the current entrance porch has been meticulously developed to provide a balanced and symmetrical solution. Special attention has been dedicated to detailing to ensure a continuation of the existing architectural language and merit while referencing neighboring properties. The intention is to reuse existing architectural features where possible, seamlessly incorporating them into the reconstructed porch/entrance. All the materials required for the extension will be matching the traditional building materials used on site.

The new roof design adopts a hipped form, maintaining a low profile to subordinate to the main house and facade. The junction details for the roof closely mirror those of the existing structure. A small gabled portico has been introduced at the center, subtly referencing both the classical porch and a similar feature in a nearby properties in the area. The width of the porch has been reduced from the previous approved planning proposal, aiming to create a less dominant addition in relation to the existing structure.

The presented scheme boasts a design of high quality, ensuring the incorporation of all architectural assets and features into the additional floor space above the porch. The plan includes the reuse of existing bricks, and any shortfall will be supplemented with matching materials to maintain consistency with the original structure. The proposal is strongly believed to represent the optimal solution for the required works, while also minimizing, if not entirely avoiding, any negative impact on the local Heritage Asset(s).

NPPF Chapter 16, paragraphs 195 to 214 are referring to conserving and enhancing the historic environment. The current proposal has been developed to ensure the proposal is in full compliance with this chapter of NPPF. In our view, we have thoroughly evaluated the potential effects of the proposed development on the current building, and our intention is to preserve it. The existing porch and entrance have been retained, with the primary villa mostly remaining unaltered. The presented plan is essentially a seamless continuation of this current porch, aiming to adapt to changes in contemporary lifestyles while respecting the past and present. The proposal seeks to retain the majority of the existing elements, ensuring that they will not be lost upon completion.

The proposed addition is anticipated to have a minimal impact on the heritage asset, and the reasons supporting this assessment are as follows:

- 1) The extension is intentionally designed to replicate the design and features of the existing porch and the first floor, minimizing its overall presence and prominence.
- 2) All materials utilized in the extension are carefully chosen to align seamlessly with the existing structure.
- 3) Detailed elements of the proposed addition are meticulously crafted to match those of the existing heritage asset.
- 4) The proposal exclusively refers to and respects the established architectural qualities and merits of the current structure.
- 5) Similar projects have been successfully implemented in nearby properties, for instance No.34, No. 30 has undergone an extension, particularly around the entrance, demonstrating a precedent for similar modifications in the vicinity.
- 6) The current proposal is less intrusive compared to approved planning application (21/03602/FULL)

7. Conclusion

The design and access statement meticulously articulates how the proposed project aligns seamlessly with local planning policies. Through a comprehensive examination of the design aspects and access considerations, the statement demonstrates a clear adherence to the guidelines and regulations established by the local planning authorities. The intention is to seek approval for the application, emphasizing the proposal's commitment to aligning with the specific requirements and objectives outlined in the local planning policy framework.

NPPF paragraph 212 states that "Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably."

In our opinion this proposal is fully compliant with NPPF 212 and will bring long-term benefits to improving the quality of life of residence while retain and enhance the architecture of the building.