

Design & Access Statement

179 Loddon Bridge Road

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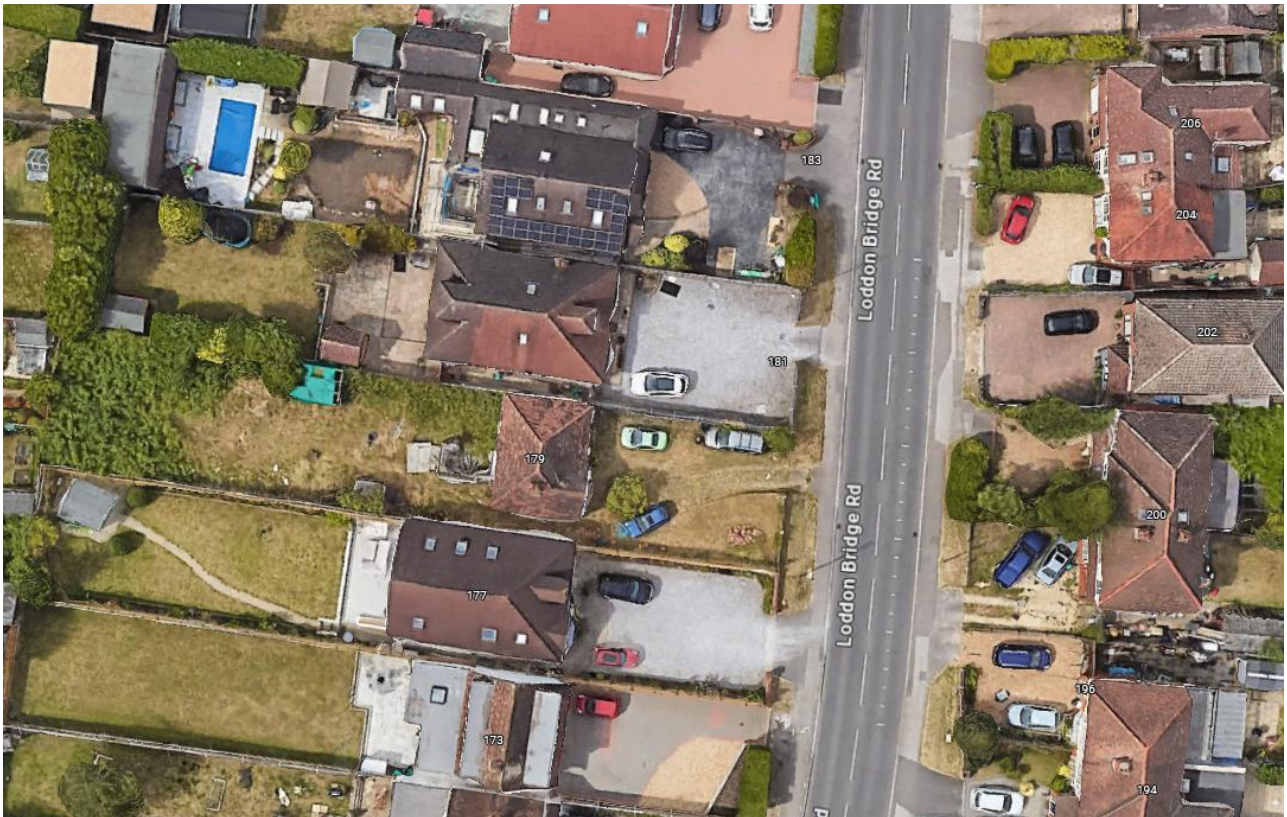
Reference jmr-00325-DAS-o
Date 13-04-2025
Address **179 Loddon Bridge Road**, Woodley. RG5 4BP

1. Introduction

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared by JM Redman on behalf of the Applicant, Mrs. Talbot, in support of a full planning application at 179 Loddon Bridge Road. The proposed works include the demolition of the existing dwelling and the construction of a replacement four-bedroom house. The proposal aims to deliver a modern family home, more appropriate to the needs of the applicant, that also meets current standards of sustainable design and construction.

2. Site and Context

The application site is occupied by a detached two-bedroom bungalow dating from the 1920s, situated within a spacious residential plot. The surrounding area comprises a mix of detached and semi-detached homes of varied architectural styles, some of which have undergone significant renovation or redevelopment in recent years.



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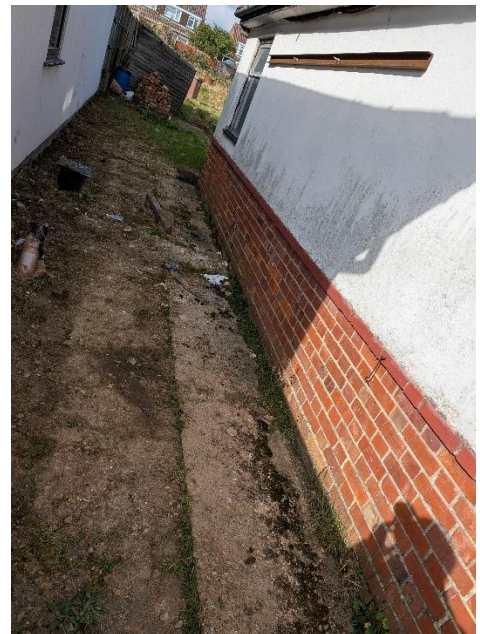
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Google Maps and Street View

The site is underdeveloped in comparison to its size and neighbouring plots.

The existing dwelling that occupies the site is in a severe state of disrepair, with temporary steel supports currently bracing the flank wall, a patched roof, and a partially demolished rear extension. Its condition makes restoration unviable, and it is no longer fit for habitation.



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Photographs of the existing dwelling

3. Planning Policy

Core Policy 3 (CP3) of the Wokingham Borough Core Strategy requires that new development is appropriate in terms of its scale, massing, layout, built form, height, materials, and character, and that it delivers high-quality design without detriment to neighbouring occupiers or uses.

The site is not subject to any heritage, ecological or landscape designations, nor is it at risk of flooding. According to Wokingham Borough Council's policy constraints mapping, there are no Tree Preservation Orders on site and no Article 4 directions apply. There are also no records of protected species presence (e.g., bats or great crested newts) affecting the site.

The site lies within a designated Major Development Location in accordance with Core Policy 9 (CP9), where redevelopment is acceptable in principle, subject to design and policy compliance.

It also lies within the Woodley–Earley Settled and Farmed Clay landscape character area, as identified in the Wokingham Borough Landscape Character Assessment. This area is characterized by a mix of mid- to late-20th-century suburban development, featuring predominantly detached and semi-detached dwellings. Properties in this locality often exhibit varied architectural styles, with common elements including gabled roofs, bay windows, and a combination of brick and rendered finishes. Front gardens are typically landscaped with lawns and shrubbery, contributing to the area's green and open streetscape.

4. Planning History and Precedent

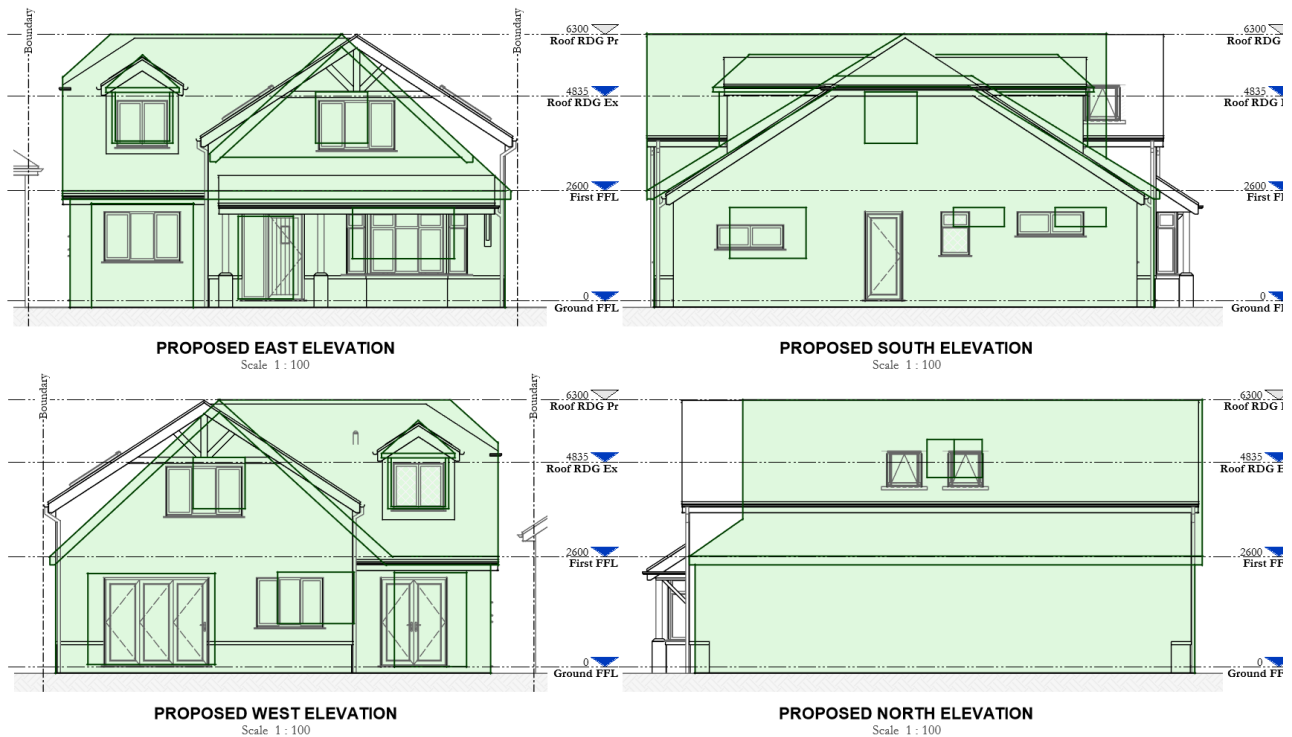
A previous householder planning approval (F/2014/1812) was granted in 2014 for substantial alterations to the existing bungalow, including front, side, and rear extensions and the

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replacement of the roof. This scheme would have retained only a portion of the ground floor and a single external wall. While not implemented due to personal circumstances, the approval set a precedent for substantial redevelopment of the site.



Elevations of proposed with superimposed existing approval (green)

The current proposal respects the scale and footprint of that approved scheme, maintaining a similar height and overall form. Importantly, the current design improves on the previous by offering a more integrated architectural response to the surrounding context and prioritising high-performance, sustainable construction throughout.

5. Design Proposals

The proposed dwelling will be a two-storey, four-bedroom family home. It reflects a contemporary take on traditional residential architecture, balancing high-quality materials with a practical layout suited to long-term family living.

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3D illustration of the proposal

The form of the new dwelling takes cues from the approved scheme but refines the massing and rooflines to enhance its relationship with the neighbouring properties. The revised design improves internal efficiency and provides more usable space for modern living while keeping within the site constraints and character of the area.

6. Use and Layout

The proposed use remains residential (C3). The proposal substantially increases the gross internal area from 65.3m² to 195.7m², split 103.9m² on the ground floor and 91.8m² on the first floor. This more or less triples the floor area, which is more aligned with neighbouring buildings and modern family homes.

The number of bedrooms is doubled, and the main family living spaces are also significantly expanded to support more flexible and sociable use. The new dwelling features open-plan living spaces on the ground floor with flexible zones for kitchen, dining, and family life, as well as utility and private office.

The first floor accommodates four bedrooms and a family bathroom, providing appropriate facilities for a modern family.

The internal arrangement has been tailored to meet the specific needs of the applicant while remaining broadly in line with current lifestyle expectations for suburban family homes. The modern interaction of the spaces allows them to be combined and adaptable – for instance, the dining and lounge can either be open to the kitchen and breakfast area for interactive family

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living or closed off for seclusion and privacy. This adaptability will prolong the usefulness of the design for future occupants and, in itself, the life of the building.

7. Scale and Massing

The site is generously sized with an area of 671m². Currently, the existing dwelling takes up 77m² in footprint, or 11.5% of the site. The proposal increased this by 42m², totalling 119m² or 17.7% of the site. A substantially large curtilage is to remain.

The scale and massing of the proposal remain broadly consistent with the previously approved scheme. The ridge height and building footprint do not exceed those already accepted by the local authority. The ridge height will sit between its neighbour at number 177 and 181. Similarly, the building line will split the two, projecting forward with a canopy, yet aligning with both neighbours to sit comfortably in the street scene. The rear projection will be shallower than those of the neighbouring properties, ensuring no adverse impact on light or outlook.

The building will be positioned at the same point alongside the boundary with 181, but reduces the distance the boundary to 177 to just over 1metre. This is a similar separation along the road, which aligns with the Wokingham Borough Design Guide. No openings are positioned facing 181, and all openings facing the side windows of 177 will be obscured to maintain privacy.

The overall mass is broken up using roof articulation and recessed elements to reduce perceived bulk and ensure the building sits comfortably within the plot and the wider streetscape.

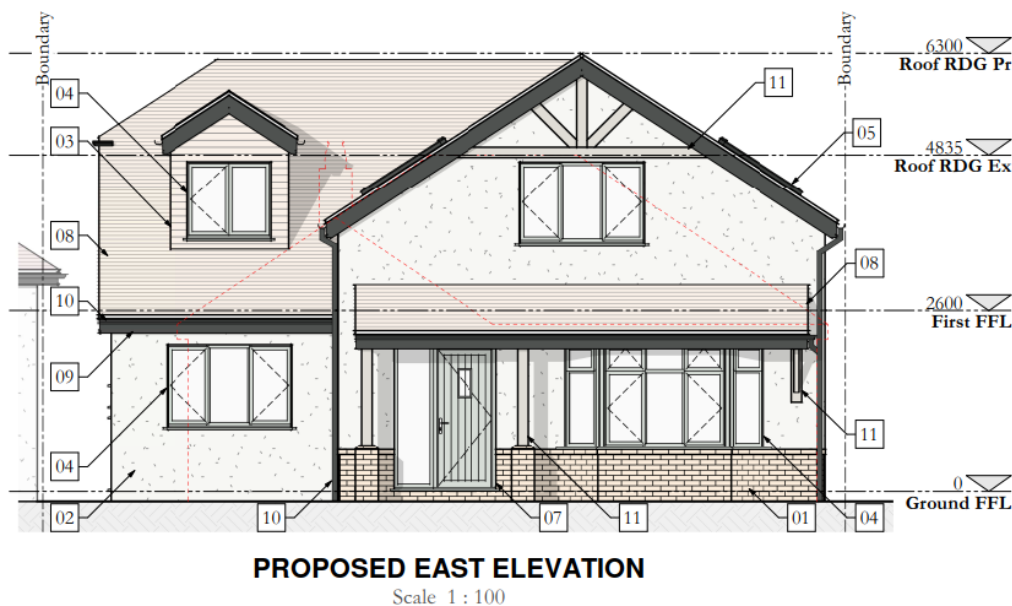
8. Appearance and Materials

The architectural expression of the new dwelling has been designed to balance visual interest with contextual sensitivity. The appearance from the street follows the trend of neighbouring buildings. The first floor features lowered eaves and dormers to reduce ridge height, while also tying in with surrounding properties. Traditional architectural elements are echoed, including a gabled front elevation with timber truss feature, a projecting canopy over a bay window, and a brick plinth with rendered wall above. A side hip roof—also found on neighbouring homes—has been incorporated to help reduce bulk and avoid a terracing effect.

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The fenestration pattern provides ample natural light to internal spaces and adds rhythm and scale to the elevations. External detailing is deliberately simple yet robust, reflecting a contemporary approach to suburban family living.

A palette of high-quality, durable materials is proposed—including matching brickwork, smooth off-white render, oak timber structural features, and sage green windows and doors—selected to reflect and enhance the local character while ensuring low maintenance and long-term performance. The brickwork and plain tile roof will closely match existing materials, ensuring seamless integration into the surrounding context.

The proposed replacement dwelling respects the established character outlined in the Woodley–Earley Character Assessment by maintaining a similar scale and footprint to neighbouring properties, and by incorporating familiar architectural features and materials. By reflecting the prevailing roof forms, material palette, and spatial rhythm of the street, the design contributes positively to the local character and enhances visual coherence along Loddon Bridge Road.

9. Access

Vehicular and pedestrian access to the site remains unchanged, utilising the existing entrance from the public highway. A resurfaced driveway in permeable gravel will improve upon the current parking situation. The proposal creates adequate off-street parking in accordance with local standards.

Level access to the principal entrance is provided, and the layout has been designed with accessibility in mind, complying with Part M of the Building Regulations. This vastly improves the accessibility over the current dwelling.

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A bolted gate will be installed to the side access path to prevent unauthorised access, ensuring the side of the house and the rear garden remain secure.

10. Sustainability

A key driver for the proposal is to deliver a home that meets or exceeds current environmental performance standards. The previous approval, while significant in scale, would have retrofitted an aged structure, limiting the potential for meaningful energy improvement.

In contrast, this new-build approach enables the integration of advanced building fabric standards, low-carbon technologies, and passive design principles from the outset. The dwelling will be constructed to meet modern insulation, airtightness, ventilation, and energy efficiency standards under the latest Building Regulations (including Part L and Part O).

The design will install a car charging point as part of the design. The raised roofline will lend itself to solar PV installation in the future, along with the modern building fabric and performance giving potential to the future adaptation of further renewable energy sources, such as heat pumps.

The proposal aligns with the borough's wider aims to promote low-carbon, future-ready homes and supports objectives set out in the Climate Emergency Declaration and relevant emerging Local Plan policies.

11. Conclusion

This proposal represents a thoughtful and sustainable approach to the redevelopment of 179 Loddon Bridge Road, where substantial alterations have previously been deemed acceptable under a past planning approval. The design remains within the scale, height, and footprint already approved, while significantly improving the architectural response to its surroundings and delivering a more coherent, practical, and future-focused home.

The proposed replacement dwelling has been carefully tailored to meet the current and long-term needs of the applicant, with a layout and design suited to modern family life. It embraces the principles of good design through contextual sensitivity, high-quality materials, and a clear commitment to sustainability and energy performance.

By drawing upon local architectural character, respecting established planning parameters, and delivering a building that performs to modern standards, the proposal aligns with local and national policy objectives. It will enhance the appearance and functionality of the site without causing harm to neighbours or the wider street scene.

The application therefore represents a high-quality and policy-compliant form of development, and should be supported accordingly.