

BREIF DESIGN STATEMENT No: DS.25.01.01

**PROPOSED DISABLED WETROOM SIDE EXTENSION AT
29 SONNING MEADOWS, SONNING, RG4 6XB, BERKSHIRE**

1. Introduction and Established Need

- 1.1. Principally the proposal arises as part of specialist works to provide more amenable ground floor sleeping accommodation and wet room facilities for the elderly owners, especially the male spouse, who has a number of infirm conditions and is now unable to negotiate stair access to upper floor accommodation. Medical evidence supporting these needs is available, subject to data protection Act rights. The site enjoys a large plot area in a spaciouly laid out residential neighbourhood. It will service an essential family need and yet maintain a high quality house design in the locality.
- 1.2. Pre-application, advice in the following publications has been examined and relied upon for the design approach:
 - 1.2.1 *Wokingham Local Development Framework Adopted Core Strategy - , Adopted Jan. 2010.*
 - 1.2.2 *Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (MDD). 2014 (valid until 2026)*
 - 1.2.3 *Supplementary Planning Documents as applicable to Residential Extensions*
 - 1.2.4 *The Emerging Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update 2023-2040*
 - 1.2.5 *The MHC&LG Permitted Devel. rights for householders Technical Guidance Sept. 2019.*
- 1.3. It is considered all that pertinent advice, and discretion allowance, has been adopted for the extension proposal as drawn - by the overall design approach. Its scale and form are all in keeping with the policy guidance, respecting the original dwelling format, plot curtilage and the vicinity. The footprint is minimised as best as practical.
- 1.4. The site is a spacious plot and the existing dwelling is a detached mid to upmarket dwelling. As per Block Plan, the plot size, shape, location and the *proposal setting* are all in keeping with and blending with the neighbourhood without material adverse impact on the street scene or adjoining plots. There is extensive landscaping as well as good vegetation screening all around, including the boundary with 28 Sonning Meadows. The neighbours at No. 28, together with medical and social services advisors have been consulted. Their respective views have been incorporated / adapted into the design generation.

2. Plan Layout

- 2.1. The design approach combines the LPA guidelines & criteria in the afore-listed documents. It is a spacious plot with ample frontage for off-street parking of up to three cars. The proposal will not generically generate traffic.
- 2.2. The plan layout aims to sit well and majestically within the context of the plot enclosures as well as the vicinity generally, by retaining and respecting all existing vegetation and screening including the existing façade wall screening the rear garden from street view. Hence, the north-west side wall will sit back a good 800 mm from the flank boundary and the single storey structure will for the large part be obscured by vegetation from the neighbouring plot. On the west, the extension front wall shall also be similarly set back from the gated brickwork wall screening, which is further enhanced by the existing trees & shrubbery. The whole is considered to result in a cosy, lowest impact setting under pitched tile roofing, to match existing.
- 2.3. The wet room extension is designed to be an integral part of the main dwelling and not appear as an oddity. It is going to service essential *urgent* medical and care needs of a family member and is designed as such. It is a single storey addition only and the attractive rear gardens, are all retained as is

the frontage landscape. No adverse impact is imparted as such and policy H18 is respected. (*Policy H18*)

3. Elevations, Roof Layout & Boundary treatments & landscaping.

- 3.1. The roofing and gable arrangement are set to for symmetry, complement and be *subservient* to existing roof heights even in the single storey context. Given all that, it is considered the final design makes the proposal complementary to the original structure as well as the vicinity layout.
- 3.2. For the west side frontage will be mostly obscured from street view by the existing vegetation and screen walling. This enables (a) a seamless but *subservient* dwarfed level ridge line, (b) the pitch to matching existing, and (c) a “visual merging” with the main. All eaves are maintained at a single level.
- 3.3. Given the single storey and frosted glass window arrangement proposed, no overlooking impact is envisaged to any aspect.
- 3.4. The rear, east face, is a mirror of the frontage, also subservient to existing, with minimal impact on adjoining plots. All materials, design, and maintained landscaping, are aimed a high quality finish.
- 3.5. The north flank wall shall be facing brickwork with a single nominal window aperture. It is set back 0.8 m. from the flank boundary. The extension rear will be in line the main existing rear wall. It is considered all works remain in context of site assessments for plot size layout, curtilage, & screening as per drawn details - particularly the block plan. Indeed, the north wall will be, for the most part, obscured from adjoining plot view by virtue of the boundary treatments – including 2.05 m high, full length brick panel wall, and shrub beds/vegetation.
- 3.6. Generally flank boundaries are all screened off with 2 m high vegetation. The proposal is in keeping with the majesty of the site for a pleasing appeal to the critical eye. Only nominal dwarf shrubbery with the extension footprint is to be affected, otherwise all major greenery is to be retained intact.

4. Bat Survey

- 4.1. A professional ecologist’s report, *Reference: R771_UpdPRA_a*, by John Wenman Ecological Consultancy is included with the application as per standard W B C requirements for Planning Applications in the Earley Area.
- 4.2. It is a comprehensive study report; complete in itself requiring little further comment. For brevity and Planning consideration Para. 1.1.3 of the Executive Summary of that report is quoted here:
- 4.3. *“1.1.3 None of the potential bat roosting features or previously confirmed bat roosting features are to be affected by the construction of the proposed single-storey side extension. ...survey findings demonstrateproposal is highly unlikely to result in the death, injury or disturbance of bats; the damage or destruction of a bat roost; or the obstruction of access to a bat roost. ...an EPS) mitigation licence would not be required for the development proposals to proceed lawfully.”*
- 4.4. The proposal is thereby deemed compliant with ecological standards for Planning Consent.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1. The proposal application is made in consideration of all the factors in this statement & in the light of detailed pre-application guidance in the LPA Documentation. The design, developed with wholesome conjunction of this statement is presented in the accompanying drawing(s) & application documents.
- 5.2. Applicant is open to a site consultation with Local Planning Authority. All works are modestly scaled for the plot size, serve essential family needs, are a high quality proposal and well set off / back from all curtilage boundaries and without material impact beyond those.
- 5.3. A visual survey of the vicinity shows a variety of local extension / alteration forms have been permitted adding variety and sensitive designs in the local context. Consultations of the LPA and MHC&LG documents also acknowledge that for all practical purposes the proposal is within a “*de-minimis*” realm.