

PLANNING & DESIGN STATEMENT

Proposed Replacement Dwellinghouse

AT

43 Old Bath Road, Sonning, Berkshire, RG4 6SY



Author

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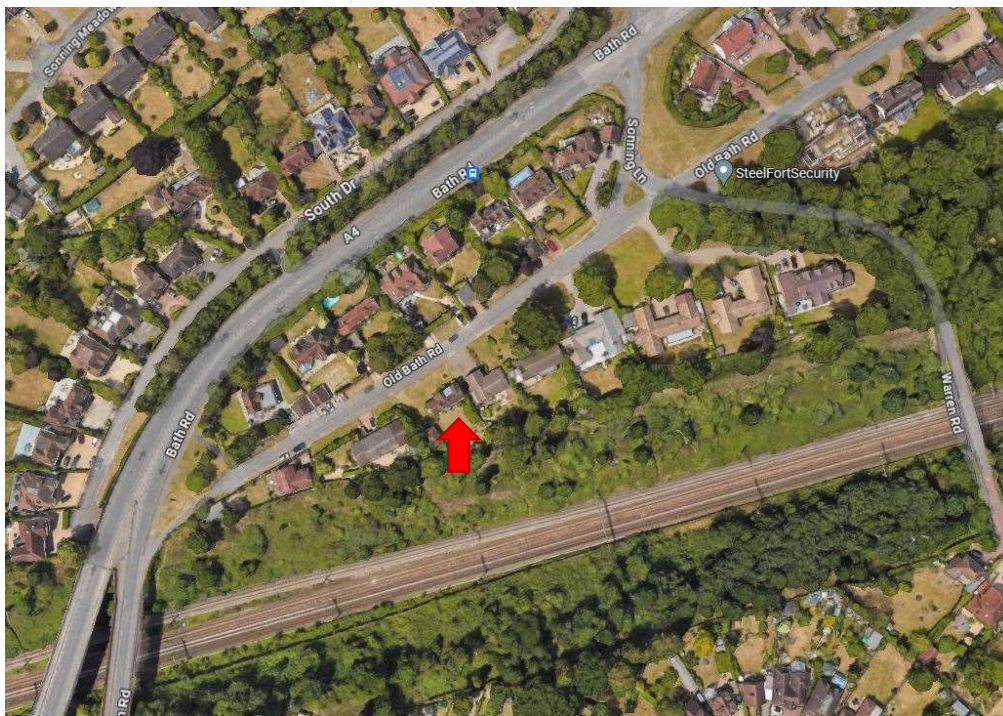
1. Introduction

1.1. Preface

This planning statement has been prepared in support of a full application for a replacement dwelling at; 43 Old Bath Road, Sonning, Berkshire RG4 6SY.

The following statement covers the subject and information required for submission as set by National Planning Policy Framework and Wokingham Borough Council Core Strategy, MDD Local Plan and the Borough Design guidelines. This document will outline the application site history and the design strategy for the proposed development. It should be read in conjunction with the submitted drawings.

1.2. Site Location



1. Aerial View



2. Bird's eye photograph

1.3. Site Description

The application site is located on Old Bath Road in Sonning within the Limited Development Area to the East from Reading, approximately 3.5 miles from the Reading town centre. The site location does not reside within a conservation area and as per Historic England mapping, no listed buildings or alternative structures are located in close proximity to the site. Furthermore, the site location is not associated with any significant planning constraints.

The site is occupied by a large wide residential building, with the 24.5m wide and circa 18.0m deep back garden. The application site constitutes about 863.5sqm or 0.08635ha, the host dwelling encompasses approximately 92.0m² footprint while detached garage with 33.5m² area. The main house is open front and visible from the Road and it is set back by about 8.2m from the edge of carriageway. The rear elevation of the main house is entirely not visible from any standpoint, due to railway track along the rear boundary of the application property.



Photograph showing the rear elevation.



Photograph showing the front elevation.

1.4. Surrounding Area Description

Old Bath Road is characterised by a mixed type of development. Within the closest proximity from the application property, there are number of dwellings, diverse in terms of their:

- Type (bungalows, two storey);
- Elevations' materials (rendered, traditional brick, hanging tiles, architectural stone elements, fully glazed elevations);
- Roof forms (hipped, gables, flat or thatched);
- Scale/footprint/volume;
- Boundary treatment (metal fences/gates; brick pillars; hedges; open front garden);
- Driveways (open, drive-through, made of gravel, paved).

The comparison of variety of existing adjacent properties within the Old Bath Road street scene, have been presented on the diagram below.

By virtue of significant diversity within the surrounding area, we consider that the proposed replacement dwelling would be perfectly fitted, well-design and balanced and would not result in any adverse impact upon the neighbourhood and the application site itself.

2. Planning Policy

2.1. NPPF

Presumption in favour of sustainable development

Within the introduction of the National Planning Policy Framework states that *“Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan”*.

Paragraph 14 of the NPPF emphasises that *“At the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking”* and defines that in the decision –taking stage as *“approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay”*.

Furthermore, a presumption in favour of sustainable development is strengthened, and its significant weight is confirmed in paragraph 197 that *“In assessing and determining development proposals, local planning authorities should apply the presumption in favour of sustainable development”* and paragraph 49 emphasising that *“housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development”*.

Housing Quality, Design and Natural Environment

Paragraph 9 states that pursuing sustainable development involves seeking positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment, as well as in people's quality of life, *inter alia*:

- *“replacing poor design with better design;*
- *improving the conditions in which people live;*
- *widening the choice of high quality homes”.*

NPPF Section 6 of the NPPF - Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes states in paragraph 49 that *“housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development”* and Section 7 of the Framework identifies the great importance in terms of the design of the built environment. Paragraph 56 emphasises that *“good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people”*. It is also stated in Paragraph 60 that *“planning policies and decisions should not attempt to impose architectural styles or particular tastes and, whilst local distinctiveness should be respected where relevant to do so, this should not stifle innovation, originality or initiative through unsubstantiated requirements to conform to certain development forms or styles”*.

With regard to natural environment, the NPPF encourages that *“when determining planning applications, local planning authorities should aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity”*. Accordingly with Paragraph 109, this can be achieved by:

- *“protecting and enhancing valued landscapes;*
- *recognising the wider benefits of ecosystem services;*
- *minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible,*
- *preventing both new and existing development from contributing to or being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability”.*

2.2. Core Strategy

Policy CP1 – Sustainable Development of the Core Strategy emphasizes that *“Planning permission will be granted for development proposals that:*

- *Maintain or enhance the high quality of the environment;*

- *Provide attractive, functional, accessible, safe, secure and adaptable schemes”.*

Policy CP3 - General Principles for development of the Core Strategy states that *“Planning permission will be granted for proposals that:*

- *Are of an appropriate scale of activity, mass, layout, built form, height, materials and character to the area together with a high quality of design without detriment to the amenities of adjoining land users including open spaces or occupiers and their quality of life;*
- *Provide a functional, accessible, safe, secure and adaptable scheme;*
- *Contribute to a sense of place in the buildings and spaces themselves and in the way they integrate with their surroundings (especially existing dwellings) including the use of appropriate landscaping;”.*

Policy CP6 - Managing Travel Demand, states that *“Planning permission will be granted for schemes that:*

- *Provide for sustainable forms of transport to allow choice;*
- *Provide appropriate vehicular parking, having regard to car ownership;*
- *Do not cause highway problems or lead to traffic related environmental problems.”*

Accordingly with Policy CP9 Scale and location of development proposals, *“The scale of development proposals in Wokingham borough must reflect the existing or proposed levels of facilities and services at or in the location, together with their accessibility. Development proposals within development limits will be acceptable in:*

*3) The limited development locations of Arborfield Cross, Barkham Hill, Charvil, Finchampstead, Hurst, Riseley, Sindlesham, **Sonning** and Swallowfield.”*

3. Appraisal

3.1. General concept

Use: The Client's brief is to replace the existing house with imposing Double height classic columns entrance portico with ground floor accommodating an open plan kitchen, dining and living room, a separate reception room whilst the first floor accommodates 4 large bedrooms, study with games room above the side garage.

Amount: A single house has been proposed following analysis of the site and its context. This retains the existing density of Old Bath Road. The applicant's brief is only for the replacement of the existing dwelling, not to increase the number of dwellings.

Layout & Design: The house is a relatively simple composition of two storey rectangular volume with a roof slope set in from the eaves to all sides to minimise the scale of the roof. The footprint is spread upon the original dwelling house. The rectangular footprint is fragmented with a front projecting central part forming a classic double height Tuscan pillar with sloping cornice over to deliver a welcoming impressive feature with well-integrated side wings of the proposed house. Whilst on the central part of the house is protruding forward from the rest of the dwelling house is designed to bring the form out by offsetting the rest of the massing in. The protruding central component of the dwelling house providing a generous entrance door with a portico over. As a double height neo-classical front portico, off-shoot forward in the centre provides an open front porch over decorative columns to complete a welcoming entrance.

The site position and orientation of the new house is determined by the existing site and its location. The new house approximately will be positioned on the same footprint and will be larger in width. Most of the houses built on the Old Bath Road stretches out to their relevant boundaries.

The overall aim of the proposal is to make efficient use of the existing site and its assets, by proposing a replacement dwelling of improved design, sustainability and energy efficiency through the above proposal.

3.2. Impact on the Character of the Area

The application property is characterised with a sustainable location and the proposed replacement dwelling itself would not detract from the character and vitality of the area and quality of the environment.

The replacement dwelling would measure approximately 21.8m in width, about 16.3m deep. The proposal also includes about 8.5m high ridge, which would be only 9.5m wide, provides an effect of a subservient addition to a well-balanced and appropriate in scale replacement building. Furthermore, the proposed development comprises side one & half storey elements, slight set back from the main house to the right side of the main dwelling, which would successfully mitigate the overall scale and visually decrease the mass and bulk of the proposal.

In terms of the footprint, the proposal increases the existing footprint of this property, in total the footprint would be about approximately 516.6m² including first floor, which equals to about 249.3m² footprint increase. In relation to a plot of a size of 863.5 m², this appears reasonable.

The properties along the street are large detached extended houses with attractive appearance with no particular uniform appearance, with many of the houses being built or redeveloped in different styles and forms. It is considered that the proposal would need to contribute strongly in design terms in order to mitigate against the loss of the existing building and ensure it did not detrimentally affect the neighbouring properties levels of amenity or outlook.

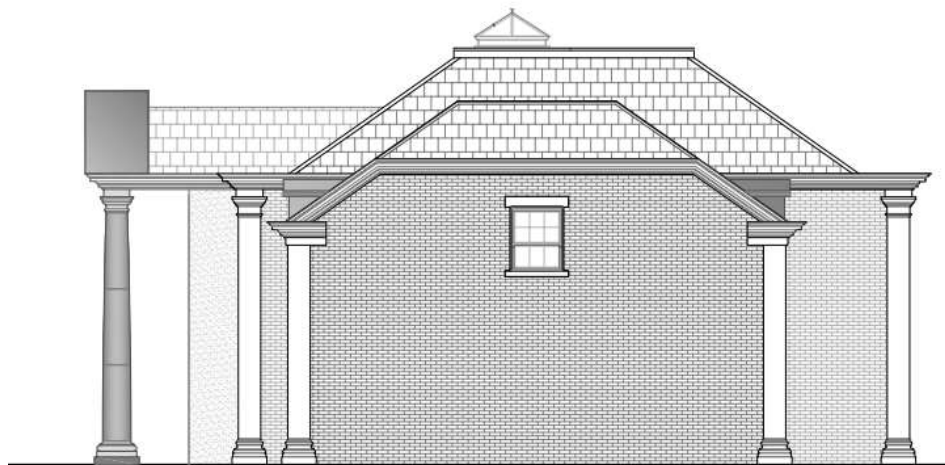


3. Existing and proposed front elevation.



EXISTING SIDE ELEVATION

43 OLD BATH ROAD, SONNING, BERKSHIRE - RG4 6SY



PROPOSED SIDE ELEVATION

43 OLD BATH ROAD, SONNING, BERKSHIRE - RG4 6SY

4. Proposed and existing side elevation

3.3. Impact on neighbours

Loss of Light and Overbearing

The replacement dwelling would maintain the set back from the eastern side boundary by approximately 1.0m and would retain about 4.2m separation distance from the neighbouring property i.e; 41 Old Bath Road. It would therefore accord with the Borough Design Guide, which requires to provide at least 1.0m from the side boundary, in order to avoid any unacceptable cramped development or terracing effect. The proposed replacement dwelling would not infringe a sightline of 25° or 45° to the front or rear habitable windows of the neighbouring dwellings (in compliance with the BRE guidelines), therefore it would not lead to an unacceptable loss of light. By virtue of the situation of the application dwelling and significant distances between the buildings, the proposal would not cause any overshadowing or overbearing impact upon no. 41, 45 or any dwelling sited to the front.

Due to the main dwelling's situation, form of development and sufficient separation distances from the neighbouring properties, no adverse overbearing impacts would be considered to arise.

Privacy and Overlooking

There are first floor windows provided to the rear and front elevations of the dwelling, the proposal would not lead to an unacceptable change of the overlooking arrangement and loss of privacy to adjacent properties. There is couple of windows with obscured glazing to the first floor en-suite to be installed within the eastern side elevation, similarly one obscured glazed window to the games room on the first floor is to be installed to the Western side elevation, therefore no unacceptable overlooking impact to the neighbouring houses would occur.

3.4. Transport, parking and access

The application site is proposed to provide 3 car parking spaces comfortably within the curtilage of the application site. The proposed dwellinghouse remains within close vicinity to Bath Road provides vehicle access to the A329 & A4 and links with the M4 for towards the East to London and Wales to the west. The broad road networks around the site also provide huge choice and possibilities of cycle routes and walking paths in and around the area. The site is within a reasonable walking distance from local amenities.

3.5. Private amenity space

There is an existing significant garden space to the rear of the property along with a hardstanding patio area, that will allow to commence all necessary garden activities. The size of the garden is excessively above the minimum standard of 11.0m as included in the Borough Design Guide. Along with amenity space at the property. The application site benefits from less than a 9 minute walk to Sonning Cricket & Hockey club, the site is also within a close distance from river Thames to the north-west, which includes extensive recreational areas.

3.6. Trees and Landscape

It is acknowledged that the application property is close to off-site TPO to its West, along the side boundary. Therefore, a detailed Tree survey & Arboricultural impact statement prepared by Roavr Group is provided within this application.

3.7. Ecology

The application property lies within an area of bats habitats, due to its overall location and significant back garden. Therefore, a Bat Survey has been submitted along with this application. There are no other biodiversity constraints present at the site.

4. Conclusion

In the light of above statement, the proposal includes demolition of the existing two-storey house and erection of a replacement dwelling.

The proposed development improves the existing site layout and appearance, to provide a modern-day energy efficient family lifetime home. As such, the development delivers an appropriate replacement dwelling in a sustainable location and meets economic, environmental and social aspects of sustainable development and reduces the shortage of lifetime housing in accordance with national and local planning policies.

The proposal is for a replacement dwelling house, poses no risk of flooding, no risk to the protected trees, providing lifetime house standards, with existing access to remain, maintaining the neighbouring amenity, providing a blend of a traditional and modern design and finally an energy

efficient house making it a sustainable development, this meets the national and local planning authority policies, therefore, planning permission should be granted.